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Letter dated 10 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

I have the honour to attach herewith the national report of the Kyrgyz Republic on progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, for the annual ministerial review to be held during the high-level segment of the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Economic and Social Council, under agenda item 5 (c).

(*Signed*) Talaibek **Kydyrov**
Permanent Representative of the
Kyrgyz Republic to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 10 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

[Original: Russian]

National report of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Economic and Social Council

Progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

Introduction

1. The time frame for the United Nations Millennium Declaration is now drawing to a close. As early as 2013, Kyrgyzstan became actively involved in developing the post-2015 development agenda. It held broad-based national consultations regarding post-2015 development priorities, which identified the most urgent areas for the country's continued development. In July 2013, the country hosted a high-level development conference attended by representatives of government agencies, civil society organizations, donor countries, international financial institutions and the United Nations system. Agreements were reached at the conference on the process of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and on advancing the new sustainable development goals and targets that are now being actively discussed by the international community.

2. As a result of the national consultations held in July 2014, the Kyrgyz Republic launched a national dialogue on enhancing the potential and effectiveness of institutions, including a series of seminars on developing mechanisms to improve the potential and effectiveness of State, local government and civil society institutions.

3. This national voluntary presentation is one element of the process of advancing the new development goals. The key objectives of this report are to assess the progress made towards achieving the MDGs in the Kyrgyz Republic, to evaluate the institutional components of progress towards the MDGs and, most importantly, to attempt to define the road map for the transition from the MDGs to the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

4. The first chapter of the report reviews Kyrgyzstan's progress towards the MDGs as of early 2014. It presents an analysis of the institutional component of the MDG achievement process and describes the main conclusions derived from an analysis of public institutions and policy papers.

5. The second chapter examines Kyrgyzstan's transition from the MDGs to the SDGs, the degree to which the goals and targets of policy papers at various levels are consistent with the SDG goals and targets, and the role of various institutions in advancing the development agenda.

6. The conclusion sets forth the conclusions and the steps to be taken towards adapting the global SDGs to the country's conditions.

Chapter 1. Assessment of progress towards the MDGs

7. In September 2000, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic endorsed the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Under the Declaration, the Kyrgyz Republic expressed its commitment to eight key obligations: the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In order to fulfil them, the country had to reduce the poverty level and attain sustainable human development by ensuring gender equality, providing all citizens with access to education and health care, reducing child mortality, improving the level of maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases and ensuring environmental sustainability.

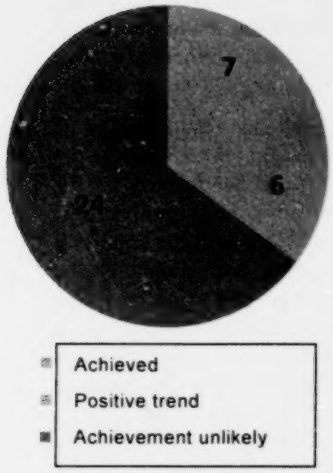
8. For the purposes of this report, the time that has elapsed since the adoption of the Declaration may be divided into two periods. The first period corresponds to the process of adapting the MDGs. The goals and targets were adapted to fit the country's development circumstances, with active support from donor organizations. Indicators were developed to monitor progress towards the MDGs and the country's first MDG progress report was published. The second period corresponds to the process of MDG integration, i.e. the incorporation of the goals, targets and indicators into the country's development policy papers and the launching of a statistical system for monitoring progress. An MDG Coordinating Committee was established as an institutional framework. Its main function was to enhance coordination among the agencies working towards the achievement of the MDGs. During that period, the second and third MDG progress reports were prepared, along with an updated edition of the second report reflecting the consequences of the global financial crisis.

9. The Kyrgyz Republic has made appreciable progress on several goals. Figure 1 shows an aggregate analysis of the progress made towards the MDGs, based on the data in the latest MDG report.[1]

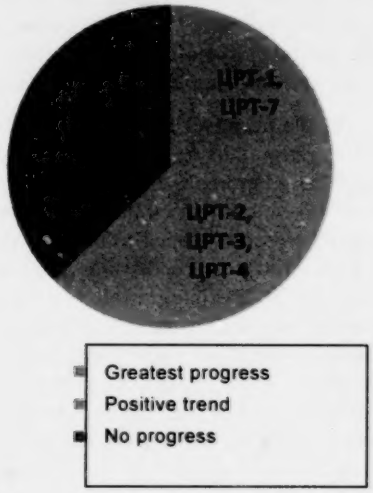
[1] The Kyrgyz Republic: Third report on progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. 2013, 140 pp.

Figure 1
Assessment of progress towards the MDGs in the Kyrgyz Republic

1.1. Progress on indicators



1.2. Progress on goals



* *Note*: there are no recent data for some indicators.

10. Significant progress has been achieved on only two of the eight goals; there is a positive trend with respect to three of the goals, while no progress has been made on the remaining three. As for the target values set for the 37 officially adopted indicators (although there were originally 36, in 2012 an additional indicator, on the use of modern contraceptives, was adopted under goal 5), 6 of them have been reached and progress has been made towards 7. No significant progress has been made with respect to the remaining indicators.

1.1. Progress towards the MDGs as of 2014

11. As noted above, the greatest progress has been made towards goals 1 and 7; most of the targets under these goals have been reached.

12. The extreme poverty reduction target had already been reached by 2008. Extreme poverty continued to decline steadily until 2010. However, in subsequent years, economic and political challenges and problems had a detrimental effect on the country's socioeconomic situation. The retail, service, construction and tourism industries proved to be the most vulnerable. These sectors (with the exception of construction) primarily employ women, low-income citizens, individual entrepreneurs and small-scale traders. In 2010, the progress made in reducing overall and extreme poverty was reversed by a spike in poverty indicators, with the extreme poverty rate increasing from 3.1 per cent to 5.3 per cent. The Government took measures to strengthen social support for low-income sectors of the population, increasing pensions and providing financial assistance. This helped to lower the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty to 4.5 per cent in 2011 and

4.4 per cent in 2012. In 2013, t' e percentage of the population living in extreme poverty stood at 2.8 per cent, which was four times lower than the target.

13. Although the target for reducing extreme poverty was achieved, progress towards the other two targets under goal 1 remains volatile. In 2011, the indicator on the prevalence of underweight children under six years of age showed a slight improvement (by decreasing from 7.4 per cent in 2010 to 6.9 per cent in 2011). However, in 2013, this indicator rose to 8.7 per cent, which is almost three times higher than the target value. The change in the indicator for the proportion of the population living on less than 2,100 Kcal per day is closely linked to the trend in extreme poverty, and the target value has not yet been reached. Up until 2009, the situation improved noticeably, with a gradual reduction in the percentage of the population suffering from undernourishment, from 60.5 per cent in 2001 to 40.7 per cent in 2009. At that point, the situation began to deteriorate. The gap between the target value of 27.7 per cent and the actual value began to increase. In 2013, the proportion of the population living on less than 2,100 Kcal per day stood at 48.6 per cent. According to the data in the third MDG progress report for Kyrgyzstan, the trend in the percentage of expenditure allocated for food is highly dependent on the type of food purchased and market fluctuations. Seventy-nine per cent of households reported high food prices. According to 2012 price data, the share of expenditure allocated for food in households with low food security was 61 per cent.

14. Overall, the environmental situation in the country is relatively favourable. Many of the indicators under goal 7 have been reached. These include the indicators on greenhouse gas emissions, consumption of ozone-depleting substances and carbon dioxide emissions. In 2012, Kyrgyzstan ranked 101st on the Environmental Performance Index (EPI), ahead of all the other Central Asian republics.

15. Since 2005, national policy papers have taken environmental issues into account as a key development priority. The Kyrgyz Republic's national sustainable development strategy for 2013-2017 aims to protect the environment and promote "green" technologies. The environment and climate change are cross-cutting issues in the Kyrgyz Republic's sustainable development transition programme for the period up to 2017. The development of various ecosystems is reflected in national programmes and strategies, including the lumber industry development framework, the national forest programme, the programme for the sustainable development of the Issyk-Kul environmental-economic system, the priority areas identified for adaptation to climate change in the Kyrgyz Republic for the period up to 2017, and so on.

16. Nevertheless, local and international experts have drawn attention to the diminished effectiveness of efforts to ensure the sustainable use and protection of natural resources over the last few years. Kyrgyzstan's special features include its extreme natural conditions and highly vulnerable mountain ecosystems. The rugged landscape gives rise to unique living conditions in the foothills, plains and valleys, where human settlements and almost all manufacturing and agricultural production are concentrated.

17. This is why the MDG indicators of greatest concern are those on the proportion of people with sustainable access to sanitation and safe drinking water. Although the target level for water access has been achieved, the quality of water access remains low. In 2013, the indicator slightly decreased (from 93.2 per cent in

2012 to 89.6 per cent in 2013, compared to a target value of 90 per cent). In 2013, the proportion of people with access to sanitation stood at 28 per cent, which is 12 percentage points lower than the target level of 40 per cent.

18. It is difficult to identify goals for which trends in all areas have been favourable. Progress has been seen in only a few of the health-care indicators, such as the under-five mortality rate, the infant mortality rate, the incidence of malaria[2] and death rates associated with tuberculosis, and in a few of the gender equality indicators, such as the ratio of women in tertiary education and the proportion of seats held by women in the Zhogorku Kenesh.[3]

19. A certain positive shift has been noted in some of the indicators under goal 2. For example, very high (over 99 per cent) literacy rates have been maintained among 15- to 24-year-olds, and the rates show an upward trend. Children's middle school enrolment is on the rise. Although the situation in relation to this goal is stable, there is a small but persistent gender and territorial disparity linked to the population's migration from the regions to the cities.

20. Of particular concern is the lack of significant progress towards goals 5 and 6.

21. At present, an unfavourable situation has developed with regard to goal 5. The Kyrgyz Republic has the highest maternal mortality ratio of all the Eastern European and Central Asian countries (in 2009, the highest level was 63.5). Prior to 2013, the maternal mortality ratio remained generally volatile and showed almost no improvement. The issue of maternal mortality is complicated by such social factors as internal and external migration, female poverty, gender-based violence and early marriage, which are major causes of it.

22. In 2013, to resolve the problem in conjunction with the MDG Acceleration Framework, a study on the situation of health care was conducted and a 2015 national plan of action on accelerating progress towards the health-related MDGs and reducing maternal mortality was developed. Under that document, obligations were assigned only to the Ministry of Health. At present, a set of measures is being prepared under the recently adopted Health 2020 programme, which will include measures aimed at reducing maternal mortality not attributable to medical causes.

23. As a result, in 2013, the maternal mortality ratio stood at 36 per 100,000, which was significantly lower than the ratios in recent years. However, starting in 2014, the indicator rose, reaching the same levels as in previous periods.

24. With regard to goal 6, some indicators show a positive trend. Of greatest concern are such socially significant diseases as HIV/AIDS, drug dependence and tuberculosis. The number of new cases of HIV infection continues to grow; the spread of a drug-resistant strain of tuberculosis and the rise in injecting drug users are particularly troubling.

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[2] As a result of integrated anti-malaria measures, the spread of malaria was halted in Kyrgyzstan in 2011. In 2014, the country officially requested the World Health Organization (WHO) to certify the country as malaria-free, and the first WHO evaluation mission took place in June 2014. It is expected that the certification process will be completed in 2015.

[3] A number of other interrelated gender indicators show an unfavourable trend. The number of women working in the State and local civil service and the level of women's economic activity are decreasing. Indicators on reported cases of violence against women and children, early marriage and school dropout rates among girls are on the rise.

25. According to WHO and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Kyrgyzstan is one of the seven countries with the fastest-growing rates of HIV infection in the world. The number of cases of HIV infection has increased 37-fold since 2001 and has continued to grow by 10 to 19 per cent per year over the last five years. The number of cases of HIV infection among women and children is growing, amounting to 32.2 per cent and 9.5 per cent of registered persons, respectively.[4] In 2013, the Government launched an HIV/AIDS programme featuring measures to strengthen inter-agency cooperation, mobilize communities, integrate new technologies into health-care services and reform the service delivery system, among others. As a result, it was possible to begin to contain the spread of HIV infection. Thus, in 2013, the HIV infection rate was 8.3 per 100,000 population and the HIV mortality rate was 0.7 per 100,000 population.

26. With regard to countering the spread of tuberculosis, political support and commitment were obtained for implementing measures to lower tuberculosis morbidity and mortality. A law on the protection of the Kyrgyz population from tuberculosis was adopted and secondary legislation was developed, and a national programme to combat tuberculosis is being implemented on the basis of the principles of the World Health Organization's End TB strategy. Nevertheless, the high incidence of tuberculosis and the rise of the disease's drug-resistant forms are troubling. Kyrgyzstan is one of the 27 countries with the highest rates of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis in the world and one of the 18 high-priority countries in the WHO European region. According to official sources, in 2013, the incidence of tuberculosis was 102.4 per 100,000 population and the associated mortality rate was 10.7 per 100,000 population.[5] According to preliminary data, in 2014, the tuberculosis mortality rate stood at 7 cases per 100,000 population, which corresponds to the target level for this indicator under goal 6. A final conclusion on the attainment of this goal can only be drawn at the end of 2015, once official data become available and some degree of stability is observed.

27. In the last few years, international drug cartels' intensified use of the country's territory for trafficking drugs into European Union countries and Russia has contributed to rising drug dependence. While the number of people with drug dependence increased in 2012 (by an average annual rate of 5.2 per cent), in 2013, this figure dropped to 3.2 per cent. In 2014, the number of injecting drug users totalled 25,000, of whom 12 per cent, or approximately 3,000 people, were women. According to estimates, the number of injecting drug users has remained stable and represents 0.6 per cent of the country's adult population.

28. Overall, in the 15 years since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, the attitude towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals has significantly changed. The MDGs have been adapted and integrated into the country's policy papers, and government bodies and civil society have participated in the drafting of published MDG progress reports and various other issuances

[4] Moreover, according to WHO/UNAIDS, the actual number of people living with HIV is 1.5 times greater and amounts to 8,021 people.

[5] According to the WHO *Global Tuberculosis Report 2013*, the incidence of all forms of tuberculosis in Kyrgyzstan reached 141 and their prevalence reached 217 per 100,000 population. According to the latest official WHO data on prevalence, the number of people afflicted by multidrug-resistant tuberculosis represents 26 per cent of new cases of tuberculosis and 68 per cent of previously treated cases.

concerning the MDGs. Nonetheless, significant progress has not been made towards achieving the targets, for reasons which will be examined later in this report.

1.2. The MDG integration process

The MDGs and development policy papers

29. Considering that the Millennium Declaration is one of the foundational documents for global development, its goals are evidently supposed to form the basis for national development. Thus, the extent to which they are reflected in policy papers is an important aspect of achieving the targets. The first document in the country to include the MDGs was the first MDG progress report, which was published in 2003. The report defined the system of national goals, targets and indicators which have subsequently formed the basis for national development documents. The preparation of the first report coincided with the adoption of the national poverty reduction strategy for the period 2003-2005, which reflected only a few elements of the MDG achievement process. Thus, the strategy expressed the need to reduce poverty, make the transition to sustainable development, resolve social problems, and so on.

30. The first national policy paper to directly include MDG indicators as part of the Government's policy was the Manas Taalimi health-care development programme for the period 2006-2010. It was the first to provide for the monitoring of trends in the indicators under goals 4 and 5 and, moreover, to qualify them as "MDG indicators" rather than health-care indicators. The achievement of the MDGs was declared a priority goal for the health-care sector.

31. In 2007, the country development strategy for 2007-2010 was adopted. The strategy declared that "human and social development issues are at the heart of the Kyrgyz Republic's government policy. They include poverty reduction and the provision of educational opportunities, health care and favourable living conditions, as well as the protection of vulnerable segments of the population. All these goals coincide with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Thus, the MDGs constitute the framework of the Kyrgyz Republic's development strategy". However, only 19 MDG targets were listed in the matrix for monitoring and assessing the strategy's implementation. One of the strategy's oversights was the fact that, in some of its priority areas, such as education and health care, the indicators fully coincided with MDG targets, while most of the other areas included virtually no MDG targets.

32. In 2009, the country development strategy for 2009-2011 was adopted; it did not further address issues related to the MDGs. Given the political events of 2010, a matrix of indicators for this strategy was not adopted.

33. The third MDG progress report submitted by the Kyrgyz Republic notes that "current documents consider, to a somewhat greater extent, issues related to the achievement of the MDGs". The national sustainable development strategy for 2013-2017 emphasized a commitment to meeting the eight key goals of the Millennium Declaration and clearly stated that "The strategy is aimed at the sustainable development of the Kyrgyz Republic and its implementation will also contribute to achieving the MDGs". Because the MDGs fully reflect the principles of sustainable development, the national sustainable development strategy, which was enacted by presidential decree, and the establishment of the National Council

for Sustainable Development may be regarded as timely steps which have helped to consolidate the efforts of all stakeholders to achieve the MDGs by 2015 and have laid the foundation for the country's further sustainable development.

34. Since 2013, the Kyrgyz Republic's sustainable development transition programme for 2013-2017 has been in effect. It will serve as a genuine governing instrument for the implementation of the national sustainable development strategy over the next five years.

35. Two annexes were adopted to evaluate the implementation of the sustainable development transition programme: a matrix of monitoring and assessment indicators and a table of human development indicators (2013-2017).

36. When the sustainable development transition programme was adopted, there were 31 active MDG indicators.[6] Of those, 12 are identical or very similar to indicators in the monitoring and assessment matrix, and 14 are identical or very similar to indicators in the table of human development indicators. Five or six indicators in the table are not reflected in the matrix. In addition, some indicators are reflected in macroeconomic projections. It may be said that, out of the 31 MDG indicators, the sustainable development transition programme contains approximately 20. Many of the target values for these indicators (particularly the ones related to health-care goals) deviate from the target values for the MDG indicators and are far more pessimistic.[7] In this regard, it should be noted that there are flaws in the methodology for determining target values.

37. The sustainable development transition programme contains some indicators which are more practicable from the standpoint of MDG implementation. These include the indicator for women's representation in government bodies, particularly the proportion of women holding senior political and administrative government posts and serving as deputies in local councils (*kenesh*).

38. As previously noted, the indicator for access to safe drinking water has been reached. However, the quality of drinking water remains low. In this regard, it is important to stress that the aims of the sustainable development transition programme include improving the quality of drinking water by ensuring that at least 90 per cent of all samples from the drinking water supply system meet the relevant quality standards.

The role of public institutions in the process of achieving the MDGs

39. One of the major steps taken by the Government to improve the coordination of efforts to achieve the MDGs was the formation, on 1 April 2009, of the MDG Coordinating Committee. This Committee is mandated to coordinate and promote the full and timely implementation of measures to achieve the MDGs, including those contained in the country programme action plan, by national partners, ministries, State committees, administrative departments, other executive authorities and local public administrations, and to monitor and assess the results achieved. The

[6] While there were originally 37 indicators, the target values for three indicators under goal 7 have been reached, and three indicators under goal 8 have been hard to monitor due to a lack of reliable sources of information.

[7] For example, the target values (per 100,000) are 19 for infant mortality (versus 8.5 under the MDGs), 18.7 for child mortality (versus 10.4), 46.6 for maternal mortality (versus 15.7), 92 for the incidence of tuberculosis (versus 52), etc.

Committee holds periodic meetings at which information is provided on the progress made in the implementation of approved plans for implementing programmes and projects related to the achievement of the MDGs. The Committee is composed of representatives of relevant ministries and departments, representatives of the Office of the Prime Minister and government ministries, and donor organizations. The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister for Social Affairs. In addition, a number of cross-sectoral committees established at the same time as the Coordinating Committee have demonstrated their effectiveness in terms of achieving the MDGs.[8]

40. A parallel MDG monitoring process is carried out by the Zhogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic. Issues related to the achievement of the MDGs, including legislative proposals in the areas of health, education, social support, etc., are considered during parliamentary proceedings.

41. The body chiefly responsible for collecting data for the assessment of progress in achieving the MDGs is the National Statistical Committee. However, this body has not been given any special support, particularly in the area of methodology. This has led to a problem with respect to the availability of data sources. Many of the indicators of progress towards the MDGs are based on population censuses and sample surveys of households. As there is a time lag in reporting results, high-quality data on progress towards the MDGs are not available.

An analysis of the adaptation and integration of the MDGs has identified the following main bottlenecks:

1. Despite some successes in mainstreaming the MDGs in the country's development policy papers, in general these papers have not fully reflected the MDG goals and targets. Only 50 per cent of the MDG indicators appear in the sustainable development transition programme. For example, the second target under goal 5 was not adopted by Kyrgyzstan until 2011, even though it was introduced at the international level in 2007.

2. MDG indicators are not clearly spelled out in development policy papers. Many of the indicators in these papers are worded in a manner that is similar but not identical to that of the MDG indicators.

3. Problems in the methodology for calculating indicators. These include, in particular:

– Problems with the base year

As the statistical indicators pertaining to the MDGs were not given much attention at the beginning of the 1990s, it can be presumed that these statistics are not fully reliable. For example, the statistics show significant discrepancies in the level of extreme poverty (58.6 per cent for 1997 and 15 per cent for 1999). The values calculated for the 2015 targets vary widely depending on which year is used as the base year.

[8] These committees include, for example, a cross-sectoral committee on socially significant and especially dangerous diseases of humans and animals; a country coordinating committee on AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, which reports to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic; the National Council on Gender Development, which reports to the Deputy Prime Minister; etc.

– Lack of targets

For some of the goals, targets for 2015 have not been established. For example, there is no target with regard to youth unemployment; the practice is simply to monitor changes in the situation.

– Lack of data and changes in the calculation methodology

A number of indicators, including gender-disaggregated and age-specific indicators, have not been monitored. In some cases, even though indicators were calculated at the national level (on poverty, for example), they were not monitored at the local level (i.e. below the provincial level).

Some indicators are hard to isolate at the local level because of the way in which they are calculated. For example, the methodology for calculating extreme poverty has varied. At the same time, in terms of the application of that indicator in formulating social policy, the methodology for harmonizing it with social assistance instruments has been problematic. In other words, it has been difficult to establish a system of vertically consistent indicators and, consequently, to agree on strategies at various levels.

The methodology in relation to some indicators changed during the reporting period. This was the case of indicators on child and maternal mortality.

4. Lack of a cross-sectoral approach to achieving the MDGs. In practice, issues relating to individual goals have been addressed by a particular agency, whereas many MDG targets require an inter-agency approach.

5. The relevant State institution with responsibility for coordinating activities to achieve the MDGs was established very late.

6. Little integration or localization of MDG issues in the regions.

7. Outright omission of the MDGs from national budget documents.

42. In general, Kyrgyzstan has done a great deal of work to implement the Millennium Declaration. In the implementation of the new goals, account must be taken of the problems that have hindered the full achievement of the MDGs. More concerted efforts must be made to achieve the goals and a cross-sectoral approach must be taken to achieve the targets.

Chapter 2. The transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Kyrgyzstan

2.1. Processes for transitioning from the MDGs to the SDGs at the global and national levels

43. The first international legal instruments governing the transition to sustainable development were the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972); Agenda 21, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992); and a number of other instruments setting out the basic principles and areas of action of the States Members of the United Nations for the transition to sustainable development. Adopted in 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration stresses that the MDGs are underpinned by the principles of sustainable development, including those set out in Agenda 21.

44. The summits on sustainable development held in the new millennium, such as the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development ("Rio+20"), held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, have reaffirmed the steady trend towards the development of theoretical and practical foundations for the transition to sustainable development at the global, regional and national levels.

45. At the organizational level, preparations for the transition to the sustainable development goals began in 2012, when, by its resolution 66/288, the General Assembly endorsed the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want". Pursuant to paragraph 248 of the outcome document, an Open Working Group of the General Assembly was established on the basis of fair, equitable and balanced geographical representation. In the period from March 2013 to July 2014, the Group held 13 sessions and prepared a report identifying 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030, which was submitted to the General Assembly in August 2014, at its sixty-eighth session.

46. In 2015, the international community is completing the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs. The whole process of developing the SDGs was reflected in the synthesis report of the Secretary-General entitled "The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet". That report identified six essential elements[9] to help ensure that the ambition and vision expressed by Member States was delivered:

1. Dignity: to end poverty and fight inequality;
2. People: to ensure healthy lives, knowledge and the inclusion of women and children;
3. Prosperity: to grow a strong, inclusive and transformative economy;
4. Planet: to protect our ecosystems for all;
5. Justice: to promote safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions;
6. Partnership: to catalyse global solidarity for sustainable development.

47. In the coming months, the States Members of the United Nations will negotiate the final parameters of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. It should include concrete goals, together with measurable and achievable targets. Countries with varying capabilities and weaker institutions must not be overly burdened by an agenda that creates additional challenges. The agenda will require serious commitments for financing and other means of implementation, including those to be agreed upon at the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July 2015 and at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris in December 2015. And it should include strong, inclusive public mechanisms at all levels for reporting, monitoring progress, learning lessons and ensuring mutual accountability. It is expected that the outcome document on the post-2015 development agenda will be adopted at the summit on sustainable development to be held in New York in September 2015.

[9] Material from that session of the General Assembly is used here and below.

48. The sustainable development goals take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respect national policies and priorities. They build on the foundation laid by the Millennium Development Goals, seek to complete the unfinished business of the Goals and respond to new challenges. Targets are defined as aspirational global targets, with each Government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition, but taking into account national circumstances. The goals and targets integrate economic, social and environmental aspects and recognize their interlinkages in achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions.

49. Each goal includes 5 to 19 targets that consist of benchmarks and approaches for achieving them, with support from the world community. In all, there are 169 such benchmarks and approaches, including 126 benchmarks and 43 approaches (measures).[10] Many of the benchmarks also constitute targets and quantitative indicators of progress towards the goals. Other benchmarks, however, are in need of a system of indicators, which the international community has yet to develop. Many of the sustainable development goals are inherited from the MDGs. These include the goals on poverty, health, education, environmental protection, gender equality and mechanisms for international cooperation. But while the SDGs are largely derived from the MDGs, they are wider in scope. They cover sectors such as economic development, the rights of vulnerable groups, better governance and other issues.

50. In Kyrgyzstan, sustainable development issues became part of the strategic development agenda with the adoption of the national sustainable development strategy. Consultations between the Government and the donor community on specific aspects of the SDGs have already begun. The MDG Coordinating Committee has held its first discussions with Government representatives and development partners, and the first round tables have been held.[11]

51. As part of a larger global process, national consultations on the post-2015 development agenda were held in 2013 in order to seek the views of different segments of the population on priority issues for the country's long-term development. According to the respondents, the most important issues for the country's future development are economic growth and employment, governance, conflict resolution and increased stability.

52. In general, respondents identified the following areas for Kyrgyzstan's development beyond 2015 (table 1):

[10] A list of all the goals and targets is provided in annex 1.

[11] For example, at the round table to discuss the outcome of the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in March 2015 under the auspices of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the SDGs in this area were considered.

Table 1
Key development priorities for Kyrgyzstan, based on national consultations

Economic growth and employment	Energy
Governance	Environmental sustainability
Education	Population dynamics and migration
Conflict and instability	Inequality
Food security	Water
Health care	The family as an institution
Peace and stability	Values

53. The public sector, civil society and small business were represented among the participants. For the first time, socially vulnerable groups (migrants, children and young people, ethnic minorities, women, older persons, unemployed persons and informal-sector workers) took part in the survey.

54. As noted in the report "Post-2015: Strengthening capacity and building effective institutions. A vision for Kyrgyzstan", young people have participated actively in all phases of the national consultations. Young leaders from five provinces met from 14 to 18 July 2014 for the youth forum "We are on the country's 2015 development agenda". They discussed the country's future, the development agenda and the role and place of youth in decision-making at both the local and national levels.

2.2. Integrating the SDGs into existing strategies and programmes

55. Sustainable development issues came to the fore in Kyrgyzstan some time ago. The MDG system has already laid the foundations for sustainable development, considering development as a multifaceted issue. This is reflected in the preparation and adoption of two policy instruments at the national level: the national sustainable development strategy and the sustainable development transition programme. Both instruments place sustainable development at the heart of their agenda.

56. It must be emphasized that, as the country never established 2015 as a concluding phase, most policy instruments were adopted for other time frames. The country now has more than 50 different sectoral programmes, with various time horizons beyond 2015, that deal to some extent with different aspects of the SDGs.

National sustainable development strategy and sustainable development transition programme

57. On 21 January 2013, based on the outcome of the second meeting of the National Council for Sustainable Development, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic issued a decree approving the national sustainable development strategy. The approved strategy paper for the period up to 2017 is essentially a framework. In that paper, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic identifies the strategic directions and main priorities of the new sustainable development model and takes the initiative of launching 77 major investment projects for the period.

58. The long-term strategic vision set forth in the document is of a strong and independent Kyrgyzstan that is entering the ranks of the developed countries and offers a good standard of living to its people, protecting their rights, freedoms and security in a multilingual and welcoming national environment with respect for the rule of law, high levels of education, a healthy environment, social stability, an international image as a successful country, sustainable economic growth and strong appeal for investors.

59. For the period up to 2017, Kyrgyzstan faces the task of succeeding as a democratic State with a stable political system, a rapidly developing economy and steadily rising incomes for its population.

60. Considering the need for an effective management tool for implementing the sustainable development strategy, the Government decided to develop a programme for the transition to sustainable development. The programme stipulates that this five-year period will constitute the first stage of the transition to a sustainable development model.

61. The sustainable development transition programme is based on five new components. Three sections of the programme, with their corresponding policy measures (on the economy, social development and the environment), are closely interlinked with the components of the sustainable development model. The programme uses the cross-cutting principle of policymaking on the transition to sustainable development through the interlinkage of economic, social and environmental processes.

62. Considering that sustainable development consists, first and foremost, of integrated and balanced public administration, the programme spells out specific requirements for key pillars of governance: (i) institutional capacities; (ii) legislation; (iii) human resources and the need to develop them to advance the principles of sustainable development; and (iv) the need for reliable information to serve as a basis for sound political decision-making.

63. A third novel element of the programme in the context of the country's transition to sustainable development is the pillar on human development policy, with detailed plans by the Government to enhance the quality of life of each segment of the population.

64. A fourth innovative element is the involvement of cross-sectoral units in the provision of public services to citizens, which have never before been mentioned in any programme and always represented a weakness in public administration.

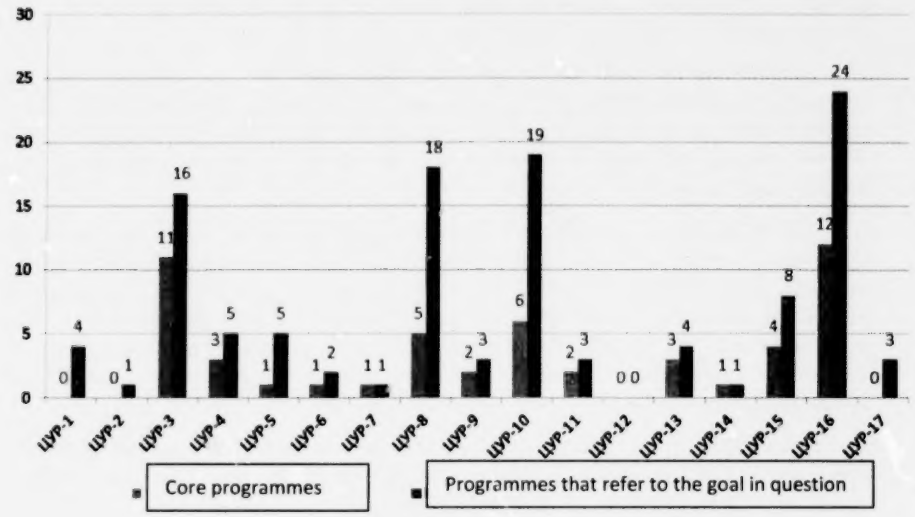
65. The programme's cross-cutting section is the one on sustainable development policy for the regions, and is the fifth element of the new approach, as national sustainable development is not possible without the contribution of the regional economies.

Sectoral policy papers

66. Various sectoral instruments, such as concept notes, strategies and programmes, are being implemented in the Kyrgyz Republic. These papers vary in terms of their time frames and the sectors they cover. It should be pointed out that these instruments were not adopted in order to implement the SDGs; however, policy papers, especially those drawn up since 2013, have been geared to achieving

the targets of the national sustainable development strategy and the sustainable development transition programme, and therefore include sustainable development components. Many such papers, while multipronged in nature, are generally structured around a particular area of focus that is linked quite closely to one of the sustainable development goals, as shown in figure 2.

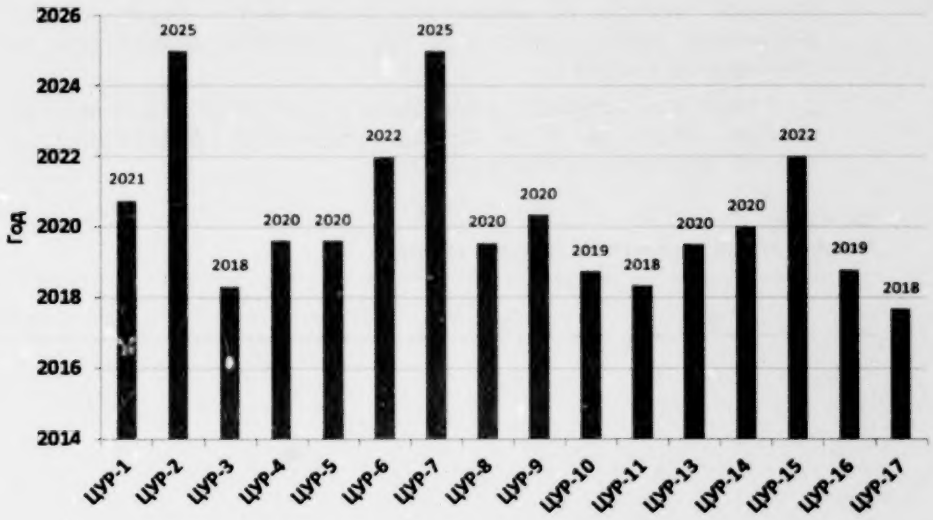
Figure 2
Number of programmes that refer to SDG targets[12]



67. The figure shows that there are sectoral policy papers geared directly to achieving selected SDG targets. However, there are no such papers relating to goals 1, 2 or 12. Most of these instruments establish additional goals that impact other SDG targets; i.e., they are cross-sectoral in nature. On average, each sectoral paper covers 2.6 SDG targets. The core document on goals 1 and 2 is the 2015-2017 programme for the development of social protection for the population of the Kyrgyz Republic, which has been submitted for approval but has not yet been considered. The lack of core and non-core instruments concerning goal 12 reflects the fact that the subject matter of this goal, "Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns", is relatively new to our country.

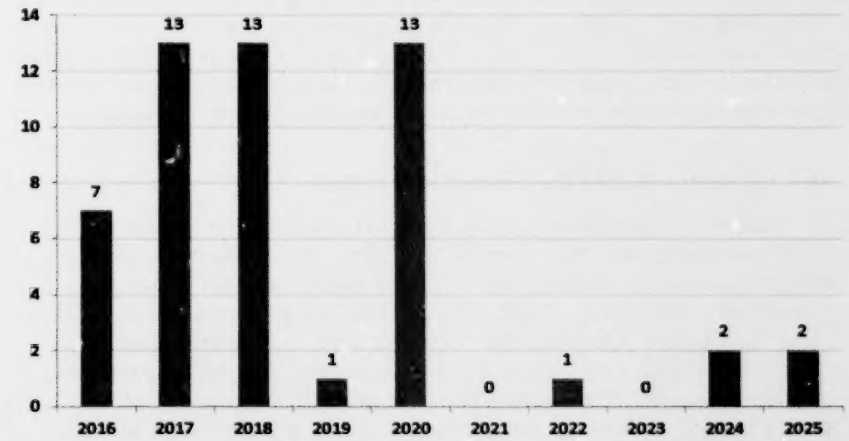
[12] These programmes were identified using the Toktom database of legal and policy instruments.

Figure 3
Average time horizon of sectoral papers



68. Figure 3 shows the average time horizon of sectoral papers relating to the SDGs. Figure 4 charts the distribution of sectoral papers by year. These figures indicate, in general, that elements of a long-term vision have already been put in place in the country. At least 18 of these instruments (or 30 per cent) look to 2020 and beyond (figure 4), and they cover nearly all of the SDGs.

Figure 4
Number of sectoral policy papers concluding each year



69. Table 2 gives a breakdown of sectoral policy papers by category. The table reveals a number of interesting points:

1. There is a definite balance between the time frames of programmes and strategies. Strategies are usually implemented over a longer term than programmes, given the purpose of these instruments, although there are certainly many exceptions.

2. There is an imbalance between the time horizons of concept notes and strategies. This is due to the fact that most strategies include conceptual elements of the thematic area in question.

Table 2
Number of policy papers, by category (name)

Year	*Programme*	*Strategy*	*Concept note*	*Priority*	*Package of measures*	*Policy*	*Enhancement*	*Total*
2016	6	1						7
2017	6	1	1	3	1	1		13
2018	3						1	4
2020	4	5	5	1				15
2022		1						1
2023		1						1
2024				1				1
2025	1	1						2
Total	**20**	**10**	**6**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**44**

2.3. Analysis of concordance between national policy instruments and SDG targets

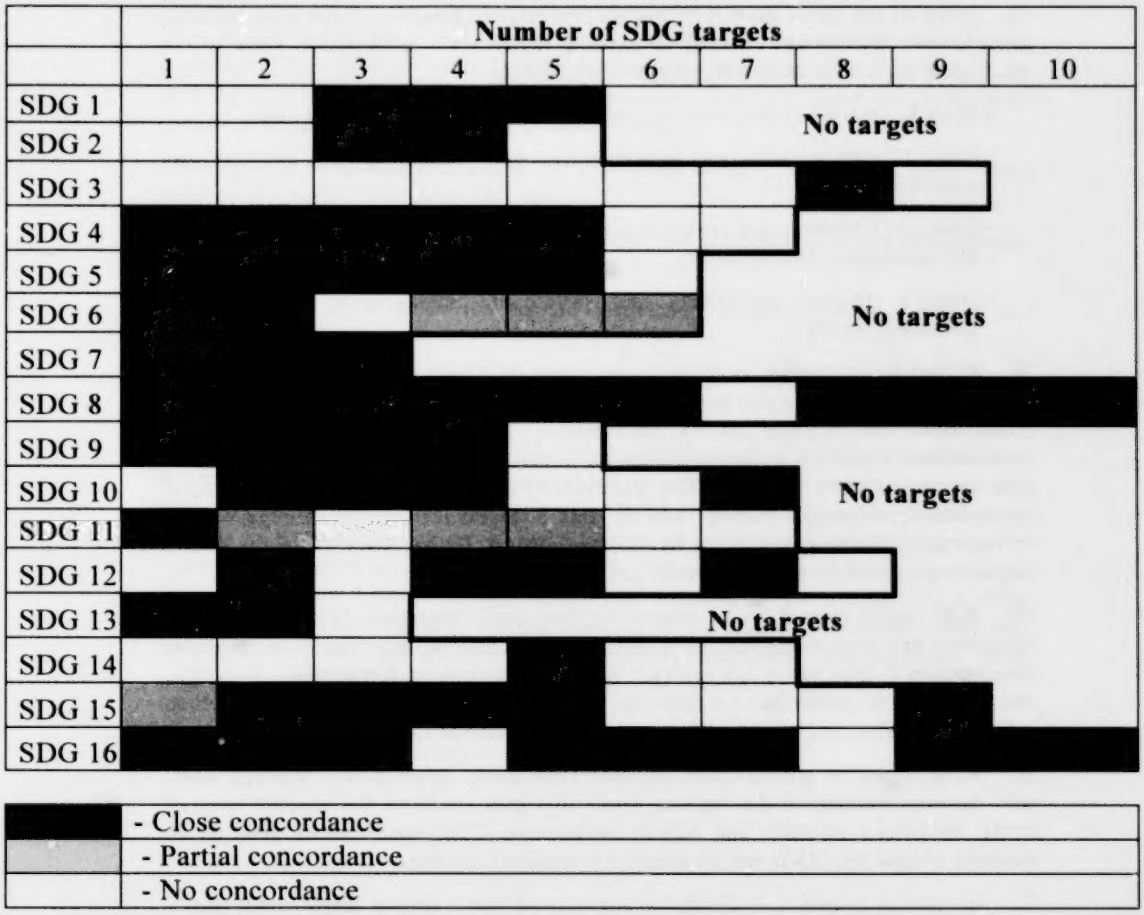
70. Most policy instruments were adopted prior to the commencement of the transition to the SDGs. This includes both the national sustainable development strategy and the sustainable development transition programme. At the same time, they were developed against the backdrop of global and national discussions on post-2015 development issues. It may thus be expected that these policy papers already reflect a sizeable number of SDG targets. The following analysis shows the extent to which the targets developed have been included in those instruments.

Box 1 Construction of the concordance charts

Areas of concordance between the SDGs and policy papers were identified by means of a simple procedure. Overlaps between the wording of the targets contained in policy papers and that of the SDG targets were analysed, and concordance charts were constructed on that basis (see figures 5 and 6). The charts' columns show the number of targets under each goal, while the rows show the different sustainable development goals. Dark grey shading is used to indicate full or very close concordance between the wording of targets in national instruments and the wording of the SDG targets. Light grey shading represents partial concordance. The absence of shading means that the national instrument contains no targets with wording that corresponds to SDG targets.

These charts exclude goal 17 of the SDGs because it concerns global partnerships, while the present report examines only national instruments.

Figure 5
Concordance between SDG targets and national sustainable development strategy targets



71. The concordant targets are concentrated to some extent in the first half of the set of goals. These goals are generally the ones that were transposed from the MDGs to the SDGs; this reflects the significant amount of work done to integrate global goals into national policy instruments.

72. As this chart shows, some of the goals include a considerable number of targets that coincide almost completely with the wording of targets in the national sustainable development strategy. These are:

- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;

- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all;
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation;
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

73. None of the goals have fully concordant targets, however. Each goal includes some targets that are not covered by existing instruments. Meanwhile, some of the other goals do not include many targets that overlap:

- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages;
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

74. It should be noted, in relation to some of these goals, that the lack of concordance with the targets under goal 3 does not mean that this goal has not been incorporated into Kyrgyz policy instruments. The analysis of the sustainable development transition programme shows a much higher degree of concordance with the targets under this goal. The low level of concordance between the national sustainable development strategy and the goal 3 targets reflects the strategy's focus on institutional arrangements for health-care reform. Fuller coverage of the goal 3 targets is provided by the Den Sooluk programme.

75. With regard to goal 14, an interesting fact should be noted. This goal, entitled "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development", does not seem relevant to the conditions in Kyrgyzstan. However, one target that is concordant concerns the conservation of coastal ecosystems, which is fully applicable to the lakes in Kyrgyzstan, in particular Lake Issyk-Kul.

76. With regard to goal 11, the national sustainable development strategy deals with the development of the regions, while this goal concerns the broader issue of living conditions in cities and human settlements. This issue can be seen as an example of how the SDGs can be adapted to national contexts.

77. In relation to goal 6, it should be emphasized that a similar target under goal 7 of the MDGs was not duly reflected in previous policy instruments, and progress in this regard was minimal. The insufficient attention paid to this issue is attributable in part to the underfunding of environmental activities and the low political status of the institutions responsible for this area.

78. In the sustainable development transition programme, the largest number of overlapping targets are observed in relation to the following goals (figure 6):

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere;
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;

- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

79. With respect to goal 1 of the SDGs, in the earlier process of incorporating the MDGs, extreme poverty was regarded as secondary to the phenomenon of poverty in general. The sustainable development transition programme includes targets concerning support for the most vulnerable segments of the population, but their wording differs from that of the SDGs. This goal can also serve as an example of adaptation.

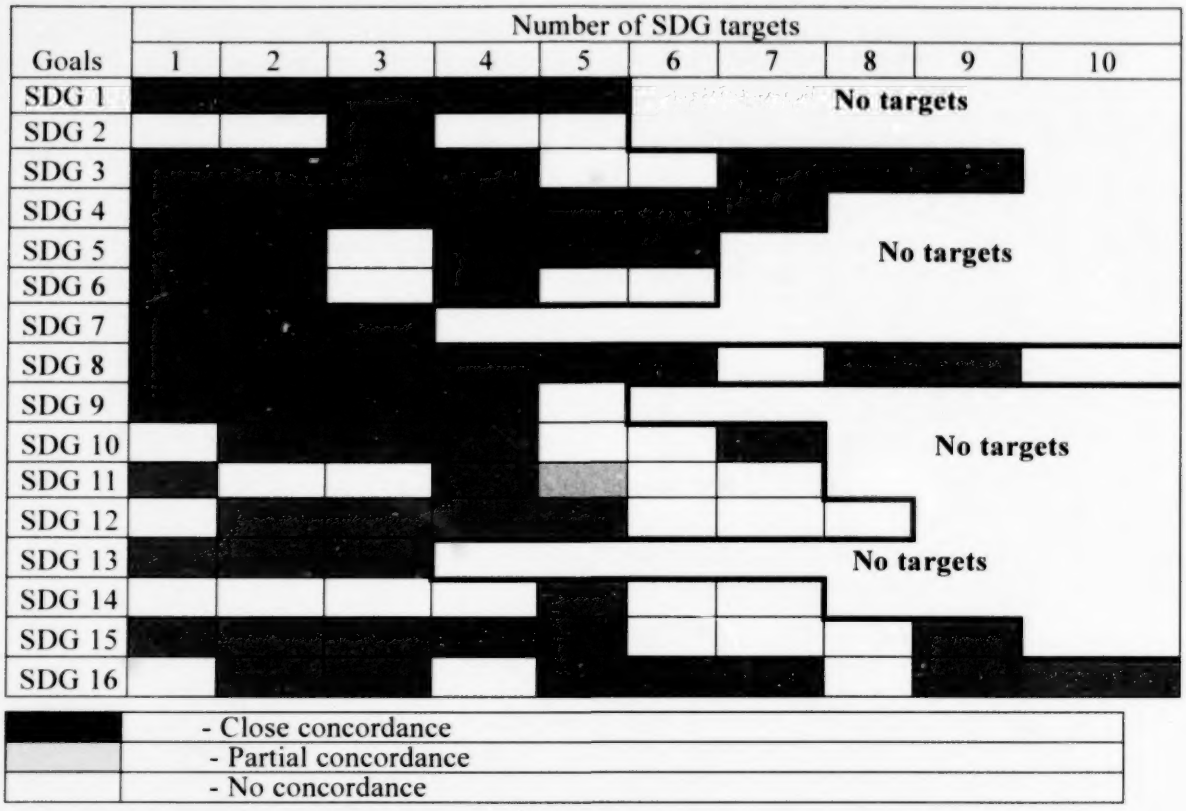
80. It should be noted that, as mentioned above, the sustainable development transition programme includes many more targets relating to goal 3 of the SDGs than the national sustainable development strategy. This is because the programme spells out the activities in this area in more detail.

Although the programme includes more detailed targets, it does not fully cover some of the goals. These are:

- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture;
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

81. With respect to goals 11 and 14, the explanation provided above in relation to the national sustainable development strategy applies to the programme as well. With respect to goal 2, the lack of concordance is attributable to several factors. Hunger in Kyrgyzstan has never been treated as a distinct phenomenon, yet the trends in this regard are of serious concern, as shown in chapter 1 above. As regards food security and support for agriculture, the wording in the programme is fully consistent with that of goal 2, but the wording of the targets is markedly different. This goal may also be an example of national adaptation, although this issue requires separate study with the participation of all stakeholders.

Figure 6
Concordance between SDG targets and sustainable development transition programme targets



82. Figure 7 shows concordance indices (see box 2) for all the goals and targets in relation to the national sustainable development strategy (blue bars) and the sustainable development transition programme (red bars). In general, the concordance index for most of the goals is higher in relation to the programme, which contains more detailed targets.

Box 2. Calculation of concordance indices

Targets were assigned a value of 0 if they showed no concordance with the SDG targets;

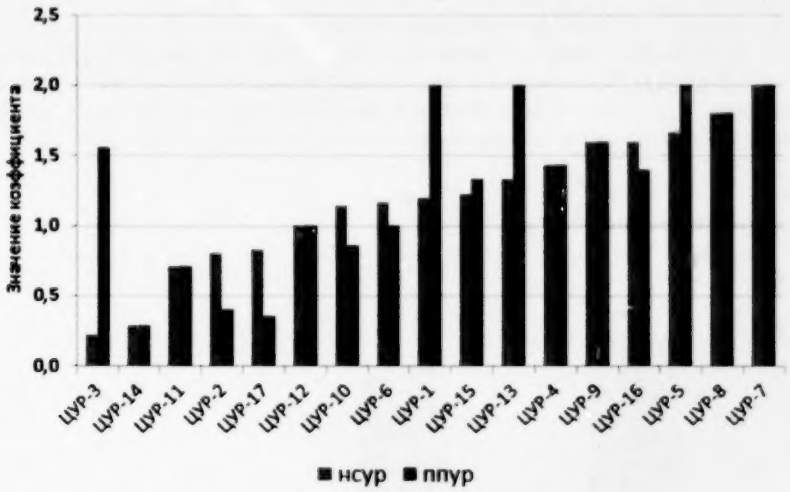
a value of 1 if they showed partial concordance;

and a value of 2 if they showed full concordance.

Thus, if all the targets are fully concordant, the average value for the goal is 2; if none of them show any concordance, the value is 0.

Example: Goal 6 has six targets. Two of them are fully concordant with those in the strategy (2 points), one shows no concordance (0 points) and three show partial concordance (1 point). The average value is thus 7 divided by 6, or 1.1.

Figure 7
Indices of concordance between the national sustainable development strategy and sustainable development transition programme targets and the SDG targets



83. For some of the goals, the concordance indices for the programme are lower than those for the strategy. These are:

- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries;
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

84. A comparison between the strategy and the programme in terms of their aggregate concordance indices (i.e., the average values of the indices for all the goals in figure 7) shows that the aggregate index for the programme is slightly higher, although it is very close to the index for the strategy. Both concordance indices are higher than 1, indicating an above-average level of concordance. It can thus be inferred that, on average, the goals and targets in these instruments are fairly consistent with the SDGs. This can be seen as a positive result, given that these documents were prepared in 2012-2013.

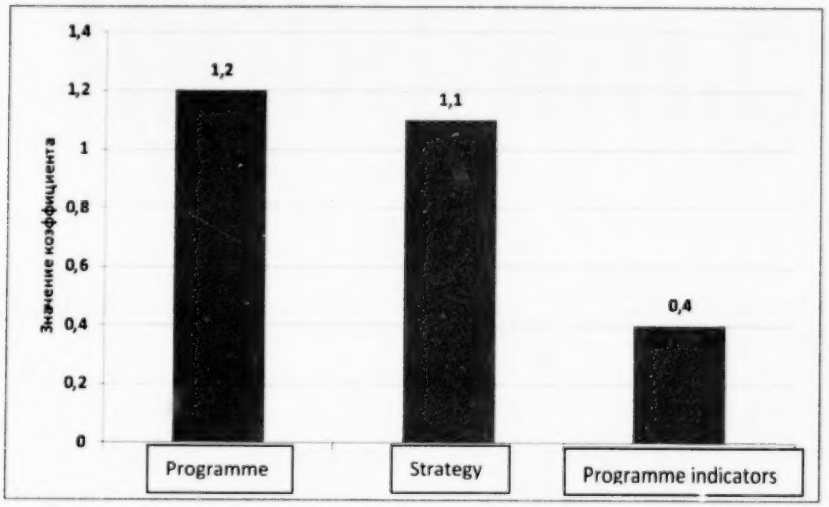
85. As part of this analysis, a similar assessment of consistency between the indicators in the sustainable development transition programme and the SDG targets was carried out. It is important to stress that the international community has yet to develop a uniform system of indicators of progress towards the SDGs. Nevertheless, some of the targets are expressed in quantified form. For example, target 3.1 under goal 3, "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages", is worded as follows: "By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births". This indicator will undoubtedly be used at the national level.

86. Other targets are worded in such a way as to suggest a set of indicators. For example, target 1.4 reads, "By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular

the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance".

87. The system of national indicators can be used to gauge overall progress towards all of the SDG targets. The sustainable development transition programme is the implementing instrument for the national sustainable development strategy and includes a system of indicators that has been used as the basis for this assessment. In this case, the concordance index is 0.4 (see figure 8).

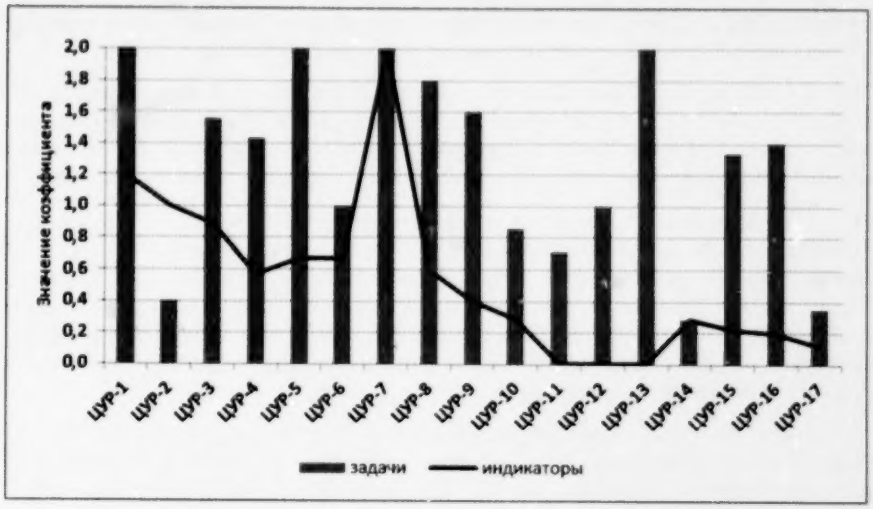
Figure 8
Aggregate concordance indices



88. When the concordance indices (figure 9) are considered separately for each of the SDGs, the indices for goals 7 and 1 stand out, as they are higher than 1. The concordance indices for the indicators under most of the other goals are very low.

Figure 9

Concordance indices for sustainable development transition programme targets (blue bars) and indicators (red line)



89. As a rule, the indicator indices are higher in the case of goals that follow on from the MDGs (concerning health, education, gender equality and poverty) and lower in the case of new goals. This shows that the institutional system created to support the MDGs is generally effective and that operational mechanisms, including those for monitoring and evaluation, can be transferred fairly easily to the new SDG system. While considerable work remains to be done to develop the indicators, the overall framework for the SDG targets is already in place.

90. The analysis of the strategy and programme has revealed the degree to which each of these instruments is inconsistent with the SDG targets. It is now necessary to consider both instruments in their relationship as a whole. That is, if one of documents insufficiently covers the targets under a particular goal and the other covers them completely, the overall outcome is complete coverage of the targets under that goal. The concordance index thus increases, to 1.44.

91. An analysis of medium- and long-term sectoral development policy papers has shown that their level of concordance with the SDG targets is low. This is because no programme is comprehensive enough to cover all aspects of the SDGs. Consequently, one of the challenges ahead is to define principles and procedures for the drafting of sectoral policy papers.

2.4. The strategic planning process and the SDGs

92. Issues concerning the integration of the SDGs into development policy papers are inextricably linked to the enhancement of the strategic planning system. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has taken a number of initiatives in this regard. A draft law on the State strategic planning system was approved by a government decision and is currently under consideration in the Zhogorku Kenesh. Methodologies have been adopted for strategic planning on sustainable development and for assessing and cataloguing public policy instruments in line with the strategic

planning framework. These instruments were adopted in connection with the State's current system of forecasting, which is being implemented through the law on public forecasting of socioeconomic development in the Kyrgyz Republic and through the Government-approved system of public forecasting and the procedure for forecasting socioeconomic development in the Kyrgyz Republic. The forecasting system does not cover the main elements of the strategic planning system.

93. As can be seen from the above analysis, a number of issues related to the SDGs are in need of further elaboration and improvement. The existence of sectoral policy papers with time frames and targets that differ from those established under national policy papers reveals inconsistencies in the hierarchy of policy documents.

94. The draft law on the State system of strategic planning in the Kyrgyz Republic, which has been submitted to the Zhogorku Kenesh, is aimed at harmonizing all matters related to the initiation, development, review, approval, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and adjustment of public policy instruments at all levels. It sets out the organization and basic principles of strategic planning, the system of public strategic planning documents and the responsibilities of those involved in the strategic planning process.

95. One of its key advantages is that it establishes a hierarchy among the various kinds of policy instruments (concept notes, strategies, programmes and plans). It also establishes a hierarchy among the three levels of government policy instruments (national, territorial and agency-specific policy papers), and a provisional system of harmonization among the different types of instruments.

96. The adoption of the methodology for strategic planning on sustainable development and the methodology for assessing and cataloguing public policy instruments in line with the strategic planning framework has made it possible to use a uniform methodology to develop all types of policy papers and to conduct an inventory of sectoral programmes, with a view to addressing the shortcomings noted in this regard.

97. This is a significant step forward. The next step will be to prepare regulations on the establishment of a rolling system of planning, which should prescribe the intervals at which instruments should be updated and should specify how the SDGs should be applied in the preparation of policy instruments of all kinds.

2.5. Institutions responsible for defining the strategic development agenda

98. Institutions at several levels work in one way or another to support the achievement of the MDGs, and will do likewise in relation to the SDGs:

- The National Council for Sustainable Development;
- The MDG Coordinating Committee;
- Cross-sectoral councils, commissions and committees;
- Ministries and agencies.

The present report addresses the first three levels, which are of a cross-cutting nature, in line with the MDGs and SDGs.

99. The National Council is an advisory and coordinating body. Its goals are to promote the adoption and implementation of strategic instruments on sustainable development and to coordinate the efforts of public authorities in this area. Its tasks

are to develop, negotiate and adopt consolidated proposals for implementing the country's development policy instruments and to monitor and assess their implementation.

100. The National Council is composed of the President, the Speaker of the Zhogorku Kenesh, the Prime Minister, the President of the Supreme Court, the Deputy Prime Minister, leaders of political parties, the President's Chief of Staff, the Secretary of the Defence Council, the Attorney-General, the President of the National Bank, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Economic Affairs, the Secretary of the Business and Investment Development Council and other officials. The Office of the President, Division of Financial and Economic Analysis and Development Monitoring, serves as the secretariat of the National Council.

101. The MDG Coordinating Committee is another advisory body that coordinates the activities of State entities, local government administrations, local authorities, international and academic organizations and representatives of civil society.

102. The Coordinating Committee is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister for Social Affairs. The Committee's membership consists of representatives of relevant ministries and departments, the Office of the Prime Minister and donor organizations.

Cross-sectoral collaboration at the sectoral level

103. Considerable attention has been given to intersectoral collaboration. Table 3 shows the number of cross-sectoral forums that have been created since 2000 and the SDGs to which they correspond most closely.

Table 3
Number of cross-sectoral councils, commissions and committees

	Councils		*Committees*		*Commissions*		*Total*	
	National level	*Regional level*	*National level*	*Regional level*	*National level*	*Regional level*	*National level*	*Regional level*
SDG 1	4				1		5	
SDG 2			1				1	
SDG 3	7	2	4	4	1	1	12	7
SDG 4	1						1	
SDG 5	1							
SDG 6	2				1		3	
SDG 7	1						1	
SDG 8	2		1		1		4	
SDG 9	3			1	1		4	1
SDG 10	2						2	
SDG 11	3	5			1		4	5
SDG 12			1		2		3	
SDG 13					1		1	
SDG 14								
SDG 15	1				1		2	
SDG 16	7	1	4		4		15	1
SDG 17	11		3		1		15	
Total	**45**	**8**	**14**	**5**	**15**	**1**	**74**	**14**

104. Several trends in cross-sectoral collaboration should be noted:

1. Consolidation of cross-sectoral forums. In the past, the format of cross-sectoral forums limited the coverage of the goals to a single subsector, such as health care. The recently established Coordinating Council on Public Health is an example of the expansion of coverage of the relevant issues. The Council will coordinate the work of the health-care system, including the Coordinating Council on Tobacco Control, the National Emergency Commission on Epidemic and Epizootic Control, the Country Coordinating Committee on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Cross-sectoral Coordinating Council on Reproductive Health.

2. Raising the status of the head of each cross-sectoral body. In many cases, a public servant with a rank not lower than Deputy Prime Minister is selected as chair. For example, the Deputy Prime Minister for Social Affairs is responsible for overall coordination of the efforts of all actors and stakeholders to ensure coherence in implementing the national plan of action for achieving gender equality. This same high-ranking government official is the Chair of the MDG Coordinating Committee. In each case, the relevant Ministry acts as the secretariat of the cross-sectoral forum in question: the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Youth in the first case and the Ministry of Economic Affairs in the second.

There is a similar situation with the Coordinating Commission on Climate Change, which was established by the Government as a cross-sectoral body on climate change. The State agency for the environment and forests is a working body of the Commission.

However, the aforementioned cross-sectoral forums have not yet been able to sufficiently cooperate with the National Council for Sustainable Development and the MDG Coordinating Committee.

3. The greatest number of cross-sectoral forums are concentrated around three goals:

- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages;
- Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels;
- Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

This indicates that the targets associated with the SDGs have a substantial institutional framework. In connection with these goals, it is necessary to develop consolidation mechanisms for cross-sectoral forums, as was done in the health sector. It is also important to decide how issues relating to gender equality will be monitored under the relevant goals.

4. Processes occurring at the regional level are similar to national processes. However, the capacity of regional bodies is significantly less than that of national bodies and, consequently, it is necessary to provide them with intellectual and technical support.

105. The report "Post-2015: Strengthening capacity and building effective institutions. A vision for Kyrgyzstan" provides an assessment of the state of central and local institutions for sustainable development.

This analysis shows that, in Kyrgyzstan, a foundation has been laid for the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs. High-level cross-sectoral institutions for defining development policy have been established and are now in operation. Existing policy papers and legislative instruments reflect the SDG goals and targets to some extent.

There are certain constraints that may hinder the process of transitioning to the SDGs. The most important of these are:

- Inadequate communication between cross-sectoral forums at the national, sectoral and agency levels;
- Insufficient attention to some of the targets under certain goals;
- Issues with the legislation that defines the basic principles, components and procedures of strategic planning;
- The low capacity of the public institutions responsible for strategy issues, particularly at the sectoral and local levels.

Conclusion

Key findings

106. The preliminary results of efforts to achieve the MDGs in the Kyrgyz Republic are uneven. Significant progress has been made only in relation to two of the eight goals, while there has been a positive trend in relation to three, but a lack of progress on the remaining three. As for the target values set for the 37 officially adopted indicators, 6 have been achieved and progress has been made towards 7. There are no significant positive developments for the rest.

107. Goal 1 of the MDGs was achieved with the reduction of extreme poverty by more than half. Significant progress was achieved on goal 7. According to international assessments, the target value for the infant mortality indicator was reached. Problematic issues include maternal mortality, morbidity and mortality from tuberculosis, the increased prevalence of HIV infection, gender equality issues, and acute issues of sanitation access and drinking water quality.

108. One of the reasons for the complex nature of slow progress in achieving the MDGs, along with sector-specific causes, is the slow formation of the institutional framework. After the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, there was a three-year gap before a system of MDG indicators was developed; a six-year gap before the first direct inclusion of the MDGs in the sectoral strategic framework; and more than an eight-year gap before the MDG Coordinating Committee was established.

109. Despite some successes in mainstreaming the MDGs, not all goals and targets have been fully reflected. Only about 50 per cent of the MDG indicators appear in the sustainable development transition programme. There is a lack of clear language on the MDG indicators in development policy papers. The cross-sectoral approach to achieving the MDGs was not fully implemented.

110. In practice, issues relating to individual goals have been addressed by a particular ministry or agency, whereas many MDG targets require a cross-sectoral approach. Owing to a lack of institutions and the necessary statistics, there was little integration or localization of MDG issues in the regions.

111. While an analysis of the national sustainable development strategy and the sustainable development transition programme reveals a certain lack of consistency between each individual document and the SDGs, it is necessary to consider the two documents as a whole. On average, 72 per cent of the SDG targets are reflected in these two complementary instruments.

112. Moreover, an analysis of medium- and long-term sectoral development policy papers has shown that their level of concordance with the SDGs is low. Consequently, one of the most important challenges ahead is to clearly define principles and procedures for the drafting of sectoral policy papers.

113. As the above analysis shows, in Kyrgyzstan, a strong foundation has been laid for the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs. High-level cross-sectoral institutions have been established and are functioning, defining the policy agenda for development; existing policy papers that define the goals reflect the SDG goals and targets to some extent; and legislation is being drafted for the implementation of strategic planning issues in day-to-day practice. At the same time, there are some constraints that may hinder the process of transitioning to the SDGs and to a development agenda that is more global than that of the MDGs.

Adapting the SDGs to national conditions

114. At present, the international community, which is responsible for formulating the SDGs, is awaiting some important events. They include the third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, July 2015) and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Paris, December 2015). In addition, the main event is the United Nations summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda (New York, September 2015).

115. Preparations have begun for the effective transition from the MDGs to the SDGs.

1. As the SDGs have a much broader[13] agenda than the MDGs, there are plans to identify hierarchical levels of policy documents, in which the relevant targets and indicators should be set out. For example, a number of targets were adopted under the long-term strategy, while others have been incorporated into sectoral programmes, as was done under the national sustainable development strategy in relation to the "Den Sooluk" programme. There are plans to consider and clearly establish reference norms so that the essence of the SDG targets is not lost. It is extremely important to have a clear definition of principles and procedures, which will guide the preparation of sectoral policy papers that take into account national policy instruments and the SDGs.

[13] During the discussions on this report, national experts expressed the view that, in terms of focusing resources, it would be appropriate to consolidate the existing global targets in order to reduce their number to 8 to 10.

2. The language of many of the accepted targets and indicators will be adapted. Goal 14, "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development", may serve as an example. Two of the targets, one on coastal ecosystems and one on sustainable fisheries, relate to Lake Issyk-Kul. This formulation, when applied to Kyrgyzstan, could be "Conserve and sustainably use lakes and their resources for sustainable development".

3. The wording of certain targets should also be improved so that they take Kyrgyzstan's specific development circumstances into account as far as possible. Migration issues are one example, as in the SDGs they are seen through the prism of labour rights, whereas a more expanded interpretation and inclusion of migration as a cross-cutting issue under other targets would be important for the Kyrgyz Republic.

4. It is important to make projections for the indicators. This will make it possible to clarify problem areas, focus the attention of the State, donors and civil society on those areas, define clear mechanisms to finance the process of achieving the SDGs, redistribute expenditure in line with priorities and set clear benchmarks for international partners that are supporting Kyrgyzstan's development.

5. The continuity of actions initiated in the process of developing the MDGs will be ensured. Special attention will be given to the "new" development goals. It should be borne in mind that a number of both partner and State organizations have not worked previously on the MDGs and that the working arrangements for achieving the SDGs are therefore new to them. The measures for such organizations will include round tables with broad stakeholder participation, discussions with the Government concerning working arrangements and the creation of specific road maps for such purposes.

6. Extensive discussions on issues related to achieving the indicators will be held at the department level with the broad participation of professional communities in order to develop recommendations on the adaptation of specific indicators.

116. In order to implement all these initiatives, a framework for adapting the SDGs to national conditions will be prepared and will be devoted entirely to the adaptation of the SDGs and their integration into the country's strategic and programme development instruments. The document will include new goals and targets, timelines, indicators and pilot projects, as well as all the issues identified above. The adoption of the document will make it a kind of road map for mechanisms to integrate the SDGs into the country's policy instruments.

Improving the system of national and regional institutions involved in achieving the SDGs

117. As demonstrated by the lessons learned from the process of working towards the MDGs, institutional support and effective strategic planning play a major role in the achievement of targets.

1. In order to improve the system of national institutions responsible for the integration of the SDGs into the country's strategic development agenda, various options are being examined to expand the powers of the MDG Coordinating Committee, owing to the expansion of the strategic development agenda. Entrusting the chairmanship of the Committee to a higher-ranking official such as the First

Deputy Prime Minister or the Prime Minister is under consideration, as well as establishing a number of thematic groups on cross-sectoral SDG issues, led by senior officials appointed by the Kyrgyz Republic's National Council for Sustainable Development. This is because a number of goals cannot be realized without the participation of the judicial and legislative branches, such as goals that involve improving access to justice or ensuring the rights of vulnerable groups, etc. Thus, the coherent engagement of all branches of government is needed to achieve the SDGs.

2. There must be interaction among institutions at the national level with cross-sectoral coordinating committees. This requires the increased participation of donors and civil society at all levels of cross-sectoral collaboration, including at the national level. The coordination forums will include representatives of the cross-cutting areas, such as experts on gender equality or youth issues.

3. The role of the Development Partner Coordination Council must be strengthened and, potentially, restructured, to more coherently reflect the SDG-based development agenda. While preparing for the high-level development conference which took place in Kyrgyzstan on 10 and 11 July 2013, donors formed 19 working groups covering all development issues. The topics addressed by these working groups were similar to those of the SDGs. This experience may be useful in implementing the SDG framework, with the creation of such continuously active donor groups.

4. Enhancing the strategic planning system. Decisions will be taken on the issue of including the SDGs in all types of policy instruments.

5. There are plans to continue working on strengthening the systems, mechanisms and instruments for implementing sectoral policies and to enhance the quality of strategic planning in ministries and government agencies. This will involve intensifying the activity of the ministry and agency divisions in charge of designing the governing body's programme of work and monitoring progress in the implementation of sectoral policies related to the SDGs.

6. Assistance in increasing the capacity of government bodies and local authorities will be provided in the form of technical and intellectual support, particularly in the area of strategic planning.

7. Efforts will be made to strengthen the SDG-based indicator system and to establish a monitoring and evaluation system. The SDG framework gives rise to new demands for high-quality statistics, not only in the area of data collection, but also in the implementation of new data collection and analysis methods.

8. It is necessary to develop a system of indicators of achievement of the goals which is applicable to all levels of government (national, provincial/municipal, district and local). Monitoring must be inextricably linked to the accountability system of government agencies and the public oversight provided by civil society.

9. It is necessary to ensure significant intellectual support from the expert and donor communities in order to enable government bodies to implement such recommendations.

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Letter dated 1 April 2015 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

I have the honour to attach herewith the national report of Zambia on progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, for the annual ministerial review to be held during the high-level segment of the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Economic and Social Council, under agenda item 5 (c).

(*Signed*) Christine **Kalamwina**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 1 April 2015 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council

National report of Zambia on progress towards the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

Summary

The past decade has witnessed Zambia's impressive performance in both economic growth averaging 6.0 per cent and global business competitiveness. However, indicators of human development and reducing inequalities have not kept pace with the rate of economic performance. Ironically, Zambia is among the top five best performers in global business competitiveness in the Southern African Development Community region and has stabilized some of its key macroeconomic indicators such has inflation, which has been reduced to single digits (below 8 per cent) from 109 per cent in 1991. Foreign direct investment has, between 2004 and 2014, increased from $357 million to $2,231 million, thereby making Zambia one of the desired investment destinations in Africa.

In implementing the Millennium Development Goals, Zambia developed 39 indicators for measuring performance towards the 2015 targets. Success has been recorded on indicators related to HIV and AIDS and primary education and those on gender equality in primary education.

Sustained economic growth for reducing poverty, inequality and vulnerability requires strengthened partnerships between the Government, cooperating partners, the private sector and civil society organizations to ensure that national development investments contribute to the well-being of the targeted population. To that effect, the Government has, within the national development planning framework, embarked on transformative development pathways that are creative and innovative enough in pursuit of inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth in the present development agenda. This approach is being anchored on broad-based scenarios that will encompass social justice, institutional transformation, economic diversification and growth.

The approaches highlighted above will be combined with institutional sectoral strategies and policies by government ministries. To buttress the transformative process and ensure that it is coherent and responsive to the needs of beneficiaries, Zambia has put in place the national planning and budgeting policy with a view to linking plans to the budgets and ensuring that development plans become the basis for prioritization and resource allocation. This is also expected to promote the coordination of sectoral planning and deal effectively with the observed inadequate intersectoral synergies, institutional capacities and weak legislation with the aim of supporting linkages between plans and budgets. This is expected to lay a firm foundation for coordinating the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

I. Background

1. During the past 10 years, Zambia has been on a path to achieving its Vision 2030 of becoming a prosperous middle-income country. Underpinned by political and social stability and prudent macroeconomic management, Zambia has experienced robust economic growth during that period. Annual growth in gross domestic product (GDP) has averaged 6.0 per cent, while inflation decreased from 109 per cent in 1991 to less than 8 per cent in the past 10 years. Growth has been driven by strong performance in the extractive industries and, cyclically, by agriculture. In 2010, Zambia graduated to lower middle-income country status and gained wider access to global financial markets. Between 2005 and 2014, foreign direct investment increased from $357 million to $2,231 million. Driven by sustained increases in per capita income, life-expectancy and education, Zambia was classified as a medium human development country in 2014.

2. However, the structural composition of Zambia's economy and its expansive territory, which is characterized by marked regional differences in resources, have generated persistent inequalities. Although Zambia has abundant natural resources, the economy relies heavily on extractive industries that account for more than 70 per cent of export earnings and employ less than 2 per cent of the population, and the country is exposed to the volatility of world copper prices. Approximately 65 per cent of the population lives in rural areas and depends on subsistence agriculture and fishing. Of the 3 million men and 2.8 million women in the work force, only 0.8 million are formally employed, with the remainder either unemployed or informally employed. The preponderance of capital-intensive sectors and low value-addition extractive industries as growth drivers in Zambia's labour-abundant economy aggravates inequalities. Income distribution, as measured by the Gini coefficient in 2010, stood at 0.65.

3. Zambia has vast natural resources to stimulate economic growth. Currently, most natural resources are exported as raw materials with little value addition, thereby inhibiting industrialization, economic diversification and the creation of decent jobs. The country has recognized the need to effectively regulate the utilization of natural resources and undertake climate change mitigation so as to preserve its abundant natural resources, with a view to exploiting them in its quest to reduce poverty.

4. Zambia continues to be fully committed to implementing international conventions, treaties, protocols and the global development agenda such as the Millennium Development Goals and now the forthcoming sustainable development goals. These have played an important role in shaping its development strategies to date and it is expected that the sustainable development goals will play such a role after their adoption. Therefore, wealth creation, poverty eradication, reversing low levels of formal employment, promoting rural development, reducing widening inequalities and promoting economic diversification are central features of the Vision 2030 and will continue to inform the national development plan. These will also continue to be key areas of strategic focus in subsequent development plans.

II. Implementation of national development plans in Zambia

A. Progress made in the implementation of key strategies and policies

5. At independence in 1964, the new Government provided strategies and policies through national development plans that worked well until Zambia faced economic challenges resulting from declining copper prices and the global oil crisis of the 1970s. These led the Government to overborrow in an effort to mitigate its severe economic situation. The poor state of the economy further inhibited the Government from servicing its debt, resulting in an increased debt burden that stifled the country's fiscal space.

6. With a new Government in place in 1991, the pace of the structural adjustment programme was accelerated and included privatization and economic liberalization policies. The Government developed the New Economic Recovery Programme 1992-1994 that was used to both implement the structural adjustment programme and launch a variety of sector investment programmes. The development of these strategies and policies involved various stakeholders, including cooperating partners, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations. As part of the structural reorganization of the public service during economic reforms, the Government abandoned national development planning, unfortunately leading to the loss of a common development focus, coherence and coordination between sectors and other development partners.

7. In 2002, Zambia reconstituted the national development planning process merging the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2002-2004), supported by cooperating partners, and the Transition National Development Plan (2002-2005).

8. In 2006, Zambia developed a long-term Vision 2030, aimed at transforming the country into a prosperous middle-income country. During the same period, the Fifth National Development Plan (2006-2010) was developed, which aimed at overcoming challenges in sectoral policy and strategy coordination and optimizing the use of limited resources. The economy stabilized, ensuring robust economic growth that averaged 6.0 per cent.

9. Despite the robust economic growth, the mid-term evaluation of the Fifth National Development Plan noted a number of challenges in its implementation that included the absence of a comprehensive legal framework, weak linkages between the national development planning process and the medium-term expenditure framework, including the annual budget. While weak linkages existed within different tiers of Government, national plans, sectors, provinces and districts had limited synergies. These challenges continued in the formulation and implementation of the Sixth National Development Plan (2011-2015).

10. In September 2011, the new Government decided to revise the development plan into the now Revised Sixth National Development Plan (2013-2016), which is a medium-term plan aimed primarily at refocusing government priorities and policies towards rural development, job creation and inclusive growth in line with the new administration's development paradigm.

11. To overcome the challenges in the national development planning process mentioned above, the Government developed the National Development Planning and Budgeting Policy in 2014 that also guides the proposed enactment of the

planning and budgeting legislation. The coming into effect of this policy is expected to provide for institutional arrangements, a legal framework and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that will bring about synergies between different tiers of Government in the implementation of national plans, including the coordination of the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

B. Zambia's performance in implementing the Millennium Development Goals

12. Zambia's economic performance has outpaced human development indicators and Millennium Development Goal outcomes. The buoyant economic base will help the country to reconfigure its development delivery mechanisms with a view to focusing on meeting human development indicators and unfinished business on the Goals. Though significant progress has been made on a number of the targets of the Goals, this has not been enough to meet most of the intended goals.

13. Poverty levels have not dropped significantly enough to enable the country to meet Goal 1 of reducing extreme poverty to 29.0 per cent. Instead, the poverty headcount declined from 68 per cent in 2004 to 60.5 per cent in 2010. While extreme poverty varied from 11.5 per cent in urban areas to 70 per cent in rural areas in 2006, rural poverty was estimated at 80.3 per cent compared with urban levels of 29.7 per cent. The same pattern was revealed in 2010, where poverty headcount was as high as 77.9 per cent in rural areas compared to urban poverty levels of 27.5 per cent. These results show that both rural and urban poverty declined roughly by 2 percentage points between 2006 and 2010, from 80.3 to 77.9 per cent and from 29.7 to 27.5 per cent, respectively.

14. When adjusted for inequality, Zambia's Human Development Index score drops by 35 per cent. Despite this, all Zambian children attend primary school and gender parity in primary school enrolment has been attained but has fallen in secondary education, from 0.92 in 1990 to 0.86 in 2010. Young adult literacy has increased from 70.1 per cent in 2000 to 88.7 per cent in 2010, while the ratio of literate women to men has remained constant at 0.80. Both secondary education transition and completion have progressed at a slower rate. Furthermore, gender parity in tertiary education has improved to 0.75 in the past five years.

15. With regard to Goal 4, under-five mortality declined from 191 per 1,000 births in 1992 to 75 per 1,000 births in 2013/14, short of the 63.6 per 1,000 births target for 2015. Under-five mortality is highest in rural areas, at 85 per 1,000 births compared with 72 per 1,000 births in urban areas. Infant mortality has also declined from 107 per 1,000 births in 1992 to 45 per 1,000 births in 2013/14. Like under-five mortality, infant mortality is higher in rural areas at 49 per 1,000 births compared with urban areas at 46 per 1,000 births. Despite this performance, Zambia is still short of meeting the Millennium Development Goal target of 35.7 per 1,000 births by 2015.

16. The proportion of one-year-olds immunized against measles improved from 77 per cent in 1992 to 84 per cent in 2013/14. Among the major causes of childhood deaths in Zambia are pneumonia (12 per cent), malaria (12 per cent) and diarrhoea at 8 per cent.[a]

[a] Ministry of Health, *Health Sector Annual Review Report*, Lusaka, 2012.

17. Zambia has recorded a significant decline in maternal mortality, from 649 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1996 to 398 deaths in 2013/14; this, however, falls short of the 2015 target of 162.3 deaths per 100,000 live births. The decline in maternal mortality is attributed partly to the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, which increased from 50.5 per cent in 1992 to 64.2 per cent in 2013/14, an increase of 27.1 per cent. Regarding access to reproductive health, the rate increased from 7 per cent in 1992 to 44.8 per cent in 2013/14, an increase of 540 per cent. This is based on the use of contraceptive prevalence rate based on modern methods as a measure to achieve the Millennium Development Goal target. While the current contraceptives prevalence rate is higher in urban areas, at 53 per cent compared with rural areas at 39 per cent, the largest increases in the past five years occurred in rural areas, at 41 per cent compared with 27 per cent in urban areas.

18. The challenges in the implementation of reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health include the poor quality of services, a non-integrated package of care that is delivered in line with the delineation of health facilities by type and issues with regard to the non-availability of commodities, medicines, equipment and supplies. This is coupled with the challenges of production, deployment and retention of skilled human resources, especially in rural areas. Other challenges include a weakened health system with a weak referral system and the absence of effective systems and structures for handling obstetric, neonatal and child health emergencies. Inadequate and short-term financial resources often tend to worsen all the challenges discussed above.

19. To address these challenges, the Government embarked on a drive to recruit more than 7,500 front-line officers in health institutions between 2015 and 2017 and has commenced an ambitious programme to expand health-care services by constructing more health centres, especially in rural areas. Within the course of the Sixth National Development Plan, the Government plans to build a total of 650 health centres so as to increase the accessibility of services to areas that are deprived.

20. HIV prevalence (13 per cent) has been reduced to meet the national target of 15.6 per cent. In addition, Zambia is on track to meet the target of reducing the number of new HIV infections among children to 90 per cent by 2015. The HIV incidence rate (i.e., new infections) remains high throughout Zambia. Young girls and women are disproportionately affected by the virus. Significant progress has been made in terms of providing access to anti-retroviral treatment services. The Government will continue to scale up these efforts and target the population currently being left behind so that the AIDS epidemic does not outrun the response being provided.

21. Zambia has registered significant success in the anti-malaria campaign, although there has been a regression of this stride in the recent past. Malaria cases have risen from 255 per 1,000 in 1990 to 382 per 1,000 in 2014, and in deaths from 11 per 1,000 in 1990 to 22 in per 1,000 in 2014. The Government is critically examining the strategies in place with a view to increasing the momentum it had built in previous years.

22. Although the percentage of population using an improved drinking water source increased to 63.1 per cent in 2013/14 from 49.0 per cent in 1991, access to decent sanitation remains an issue of concern. The proportion of the population without access to an improved sanitation facility increased from 26 per cent in 1991

to 72.7 per cent in 2010. Another concern is the rate of deforestation in Zambia. Though the proportion of land protected to maintain biological diversity has remained relatively stable at 38.8 per cent in 1990 and increased slightly to 41 per cent in 2013, land covered by forest decreased from 59.8 per cent to 49.9 per cent in the same period, owing to the loss of 250,000 to 300,000 hectares of forest to deforestation every year.

23. Zambia, like most developing countries, is trying to cope with the issues of climate change as a result of its low capacity to respond and adapt. The lack of reliable information for decision-making makes it difficult to both predict climate variability and provide early warning for related disasters, and to develop responsive and relevant policies and strategies for a national early warning system. To this effect, Zambia has embarked on a process of mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in its national development plans. Instruments for climate proofing sector strategies have been devised and will be effected in the Seventh National Development Plan.

24. Cognizant of the fact that deforestation and unsafe land use practices are the largest contributors to carbon dioxide emissions, followed by factors associated with industrial activities, mitigation and adaptation measures will be intensified in these sectors while ensuring that other factors that contribute to accelerating climate change are contained. In terms of ozone-depleting substances, Zambia has witnessed a decline from 34.6 ozone-depleting potential (ODP) tons in 1990 to about 2.0 ODP tons in 2008, even though the country was still consuming hydrochloroflurocarbons equivalent to 9.23 ODP tons by 2011. Meanwhile, the proportion of the population using solid fuels has declined from 89 per cent in 1990 to 82.9 per cent in 2010.

25. Overall, there are a number of challenges associated with environmental degradation that include high levels of poverty, which leave majority of the poor, especially in rural areas, dependent on natural resources for livelihoods. As these poor people become more impoverished, they tend to resort to using less sustainable practices of production and harvesting from the already declining natural biomass, thereby contributing to its further degradation. Noticing that this tends to create a vicious cycle, whereby both poverty and resource degradation increase as they mutually re-enforce each other, the Government has introduced specific programmes aimed at reducing heavy dependency on the environment for energy and fuel. The Rural Electrification Programme is one such intervention measure aimed at increasing rural people's access to electricity through affordable and cheaper means, such as solar energy. This intervention has seen the percentage of households with access to electricity rise from 18.5 per cent in 2007 to 27.9 per cent in 2013/14.

26. With regard to meeting the targets for Goal 8, there is observed progress noted based on indicators such as official development assistance (ODA), foreign direct investment, market access, debt sustainability and communication and connectivity.

27. Official development assistance to Zambia had increased from 4.6 per cent of GDP in 2006 to 5.9 per cent in 2009 before declining to 3.0 per cent of GDP in 2013. By 2011, ODA was estimated at $480.16 million.[b] In 2013, total grants accounted for 0.8 per cent of GDP resulting from direct budget support (0.2 per

[b] United Nations Development Programme and Ministry of Finance, *Millennium Goals Progress Report, Zambia, 2013*, Lusaka, 2013.

cent), sector budget support (0.1 per cent) and project support (0.5 per cent). Sector-wide approaches also accounted for a further 0.5 per cent of GDP.[c] With the current trend in ODA, the Government will have to develop and implement innovative and sustainable domestic financing mechanisms.

28. In terms of foreign direct investment, Zambia has witnessed substantial growth in inflows, with the Bank of Zambia estimating a fourteenfold growth between 2000 and 2015, resulting from an improved investment climate based on prudent macroeconomic management. By September 2014, such inflows were estimated at $2,231.5 million, 6.3 per cent higher than the 2013 inflows.

29. Access to markets is paramount for a landlocked country like Zambia that is surrounded by eight countries and has membership in the Southern African Development Community and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. By removing barriers to trade and embracing a multilateral trading system since 1991, Zambia is now a more open, non-discriminating and rules-based trading economy.

30. Regarding debt sustainability, external public debt fell from 179 per cent of GDP in 2002 to less than 10 per cent in 2007. However, this increased from 10.3 per cent in 2011 to 15.4 per cent in 2012 and was further estimated at around 15 per cent in 2013. By September 2014, external debt stood at $4.7 billion, with domestic debt making up 13.6 per cent of GDP.

31. With regard to information and communications technology (ICTs) and working with the private sector, Zambia has performed reasonably well, with the number of cellular phone subscribers growing from 50,000 in 2000 to more than 10 million in 2012 and having already exceeded a national projection for 2015 of 300 per 1,000 inhabitants. By 2013, the subscriber base was estimated at 10,395,801. Internet penetration increased from 17.3 per 1,000 inhabitants in 2012 to 18.5 per 1,000 inhabitants in 2013.

C. Policy interventions, strategies and lessons learned

1. Policy interventions and strategies

32. An important primary development goal for Zambia is to ensure a national response that creates an environment with greater social justice and equity in accessing the fundamental drivers of development, namely, education, health, food security and jobs, especially among women and the youth. To this end, national development strategies focus on addressing low levels of formal and decent employment, promoting rural development, reducing widening inequalities and promoting economic diversification. Further, the country requires developing capacity to capture revenues from its vast natural resources and reallocate them across the country to reduce income and regional inequalities through investments in both the social and productive sectors.

33. Government development priorities include enhancing national capacity for transforming deep-seated negative sociocultural norms, values and factors that inhibit participation in national processes, gender equality and inclusiveness. Cognizant that limited participation in national processes, such as in national development, undermines nation-building, whereas limited transparency, accountability and

[c] Ministry of Finance, Annual Economic Report 2013, Lusaka, 2014.

inadequate implementation capacity in national institutions adversely affects the achievement of development results, the Government has put a high premium on promoting subsidiarity and broader participation in national planning processes through the National Planning and Budgeting Policy. This is also expected to strengthen the integration of planning processes such as the national budget, physical planning, and decentralized planning systems to bring about coherence of national policies and programmes leading to the attainment of desired outcomes.

34. Strategies have been put in place to strengthen national capacities to promote results-oriented planning and monitoring of development programmes. This resulted in the development of 39 national indicators for measuring performance and subsequently, towards the attainment of the 2015 Millennium Development Goal targets. Beyond this, there are measures to include the identification and targeting of vulnerable populations and work out tangible programmes to empower them. These measures included the establishment of national institutions such as the Citizen Economic Empowerment Commission, the National AIDS Council and the Industrial Development Corporation, and the revitalization of programmes such as the Youth Empowerment Fund, the Women's Empowerment Fund and the Constituency Development Fund. In terms of legislative reforms, the Government passed the Anti-Gender-Based Violence Act and an Education Act. In addition, the Government undertook a constitutional review process to meet the aspirations of the people in respect of governance.

2. Key lessons learned

35. Zambia's achievement of human development objectives and the Millennium Development Goal targets was adversely affected by a set of mutually reinforcing critical factors. The challenge of translating high economic growth into stronger sources of productive employment and low productivity of labour in the agricultural sector slowed down poverty reduction. The slow progress towards poverty reduction adversely affected the achievement of access to health services and the empowerment of women, among other indicators. Similarly, Zambia's population growth rate of 2.8 per cent per annum during the period 2000-2010 was not adequately matched by commensurate social and economic transformation. Service delivery mechanisms have been below the required optimum capacity and this was evidenced by pressure exerted on existing infrastructure such as schools, health and water and sanitation facilities. resulting in reduced quality of services and poor human development indicators. This led the Government to embark on an ambitious expansionary infrastructure development in the health, education, water and sanitation sectors and the road subsector with a view to enhancing service delivery and coping with the rising demands for such services.

36. The Government has also recognized that the "working in silos" approach to tackling developmental challenges by sectors has had a negative impact on addressing the mutually reinforcing factors required to address the Millennium Development Goals. For instance, the reduction of deforestation requires policy and legal interventions in the agricultural, industrial and energy sectors. Further, the mainstreaming of climate change in productive sectors is required to consolidate development gains in sectors such as agriculture, energy and water that have a bearing on Goal 7. In order to redress this, Government has, in the Revised Sixth National Development Plan, put in place an intersectoral collaborative framework to promote synergies between various sectors in the implementation of national

development plans. Similarly, the sector advisory groups that advise the Government on planning, priority setting, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of development programmes are being redesigned to reflect a coherent and interdependent structure of sectors so as to promote collectiveness in tackling development interventions between sectors. The sector advisory groups comprise both State and non-State development actors. This lesson is also drawn from the framework used to successfully implement Goals 2 and 6. Four critical inferences can be elicited from the four targets that have been met, as described in the paragraphs below.

Outcome versus output approach to development

37. In contrast to other Millennium Development Goals, interventions in Goals 2 and 6 were based on multidimensional and multifaceted factors required to achieve a desired outcome. In the case of school feeding programmes (Goal 2), social cash transfers, legal and policy reforms and advocacy programmes were instituted to promote school attendance. As for Goal 6, the National AIDS Council, integral plans, policy reforms, community awareness and access to treatment were part of an integrated approach towards its implementation. Further, the Council was in a position to effectively provide leadership, coordination and fund management for the response to HIV/AIDS.

38. By contrast, an output approach was taken in the implementation of Goals 4, 5, and 7, which posted slower progress. Policies and legal frameworks to address deforestation were taken without ensuring coherence with those in agriculture or industry. Further, adequate investment or policy environment to promote alternative energy sources was not fostered to reinforce the measures required to stem deforestation. Inadequate linkages between increased secondary and tertiary education with reduction in child mortality and better maternal health were defined and addressed. Moreover, the need for providing physical infrastructure such as roads was not identified as a facilitator in the achievement of Goals 4 and 5. A modest decrease in child and maternal mortality rates has been observed with an increase in investment in physical infrastructure and support through skilled health staff at facilities.

Institutional arrangements

39. Effective and accountable institutions are necessary for the successful attainment of the development agenda. This requires investment in data generation and effective monitoring arrangements as an integral part of management. In the future, the coordination of policies and plans will form part of the discourse on institutional arrangements to domesticate the global development agenda and commitments.

Mechanism and policies

40. While the Millennium Development Goals in themselves were well articulated, there were no clear mechanisms or policies to adequately support targeting or implementation at the national level. The coming into effect of the National Planning and Budgeting Policy and its ensuing legislation is expected to resolve this.

Broad based engagement

41. Engagement on the Millennium Development Goals was primarily government led, with minimum public participation in their formulation and implementation. Limited public engagement contributed to weak national ownership, public accountability and resourcing of interventions. The reorganization of the sector advisory groups is necessitated in part by the need to galvanize the support of the private sector, civil society organizations and faith-based organizations so as to enlist their involvement in project implementation.

3. Collaboration with development partners

42. For Zambia, collaboration with development cooperation partners is expected to contribute towards ensuring that: (a) productive sectors expand income-earning opportunities that are decent and sustainable, especially for youth and women in the poorest areas; (b) partnerships with the private sector, in particular those in the extractive, agriculture and energy sectors, are strengthened to develop and support projects/programmes together; (c) national institutions at all levels target, manage, coordinate and account for resources for equitable service delivery; (d) Zambia promotes equitable and effective participation in national and democratic processes, especially by women, youth and marginalized groups; and (e) the protection and promotion of human rights and human security, access to justice and gender equality, with particular focus on the rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups, are improved.

43. New cooperation architecture is expected with Zambia transitioning to middle-income status. The new architecture should be three dimensional, that is, donor nations extending support, the recipient nation receiving and the two together developing a sustainable capacity. The cooperation is therefore expected to comprise innovative approaches to supporting the Government in developing capacities and institutions that can respond quickly to internal and external shocks. This includes support to the transformative institutional and capacity development required to promote national programme and policy coordination and coherence. At the same time, support is needed for the transformation of negative social and cultural traditions to facilitate broad-based participation, greater transparency and increased accountability, wider adherence to the rule of law and a better response to climate change.

44. The collaboration with the international community is expected to contribute towards fostering environmentally sustainable inclusive economic growth, democratic governance for enhanced citizen participation and strengthening institutions to ensure access to basic services. It is further expected to strengthen policy coherence, accountability, institutional reform and public participation for the reduction of poverty and inequalities. In addition, the Government would like to domesticate successful experiences in resource mobilization to reinforce its capacity to access and manage existing and emerging vertical funds such as the Green Climate funds, which are critical for countries in transition to middle-income status.

45. Based on past experiences within Zambia and other developing countries, the United Nations and its programmes and Green Climate funds are better placed to assist Zambia in cultivating an environment that will:

(a) Foster innovation and the development of independent thought and policy options;

(b) Develop policies and normative frameworks and their subsequent implementation, in line with the international conventions and treaties to which Zambia is a State party;

(c) Develop knowledge networks and sharing, and the piloting of new initiatives;

(d) Build the institutional capacity of partners at all levels.

III. Thematic focus

A. Opportunities and transition to the sustainable development goals

46. Zambia welcomes the five transformative areas upon which the sustainable development goals are founded because they provide the fundamental basis for social justice and are in line with the country's national values, principles of national development and Vision 2030.

47. Valuable lessons have been learned from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the successful broad-based participation during the development of the sustainable development goals. Therefore, Zambia's transition to and domestication of the sustainable development goals should be based on the following principles: (a) broad-based engagement across government ministries, the community and national institutions; (b) the recognition of the goals as applicable to the developed countries as they are to the developing countries and thereby dictating a new development cooperation architecture; (c) the adoption of engagement strategies that promote partnerships in a transformative manner by seeking to develop the capacities of national institutions and Zambia's human capital rather than having development partners directly providing service delivery.

48. Zambia will endeavour to undertake bold steps for the successful transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals. A new development paradigm based on partnerships as opposed to donor nation/recipient nations, underpinned by solidarity, cooperation and mutual accountability, will be encouraged alongside the approval process for the goals. Zambia will support global and national development policies that are outcome-based as opposed to output-based. Therefore new capacities need to be developed at all levels, in countries of the global North and South as well as in development agencies. Furthermore, Zambia underscores the need to ensure that the development of institutions and human capital are made an integral part of the development process.

49. At a national level, the primary focus needs to be placed on sustainable development at the core of socioeconomic policies. This requires the integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability. Under the sustainable development goal agenda, Zambia will, on its part seek, to transform its economies for jobs and inclusive growth, build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions and forge a new global partnership.

50. An opportunity has, however, been provided in Zambia for working within the broader United Nations development agenda through the development of the country's

demographic dividend model that harmonizes with the long-term Vision 2030. Using the targets derived from this demographic dividend study, the Government is revising the national population policy, with a view to making it an overarching policy from which other sectoral policies will derive respective strategies and policies. The demographic dividend model and the revised national population policy will further guide the direction, targets and strategies for the Seventh National Development Plan (2017-2021).

51. Within the framework of the national development and budgeting policy, Zambia will aim at strengthening the coordinated approach in undertaking the national development planning process. While the policy enhances the implementation of the long- and medium-term plans as it establishes a link between the plan and the medium-term expenditure framework and subsequently, the annual budgets, it also promotes the decentralized governance architecture as envisaged under the national decentralization policy and the proposed decentralization implementation plan.

52. Zambia's development and launch of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, in September 2014, is a great opportunity to ensure that accurate and timely data are made available to decision makers, including citizens in marginalized rural communities. Statistical evidence, especially at the grass-roots community level, highlights the magnitude and manifestation of existing inequalities and vulnerabilities. Subnational information to the rights holders enables them to realize their circumstances and encourage their participation and possible representation in national development processes at all levels in order to claim their rights. A sensitized and empowered marginalized group of rights holders will demand decentralized decision-making and fiscal devolution based on a domestic resource allocation system. This will in turn strengthen local-level institutional capacities that have been major bottlenecks in ensuring the implementation of the national decentralization policy in Zambia.

53. The timing of the sustainable development presents a valuable opportunity for Zambia, as the country would be in the process of articulating its Seventh National Development Plan (2017-2021). The United Nations system would be welcome to partner with Zambia in domesticating the sustainable development goals into the strategies of the plan.

54. Most important in this transitioning period is the element of governance, a key core pillar that cuts across all the key core dimensions of the sustainable development goals. Governance was not a core dimension of the Millennium Development Goals; however, it is key to enhancing Zambia's performance even in the national development planning process.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

55. For Zambia to ensure the balance of inclusive economic development and generate enough resources to ensure investment for social inclusion and the improved well-being of all Zambians, the country will need to embrace new technologies that will combine improving the living standards of the poor and managing ecological

challenges. The significance given to science and technology in the Revised Sixth National Development Plan is progress in the right direction even though the mainstreaming of science, technology and innovation into sectoral strategies, as is also the case with environmental sustainability, is probably more effective.

56. Despite Zambia's efforts through the Private Sector Development Reform Programme, there has been very minimal participation of the private sector in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. As Jeffrey Sachs indicated, the private sector is the main productive sector and holder of much of the advanced technologies and management systems that will be crucial for the success of the sustainable development goals.[d] Moreover, the private sector should support the sustainable development goals in practical and measurable ways, with their policies, production processes and engagement with stakeholders. Unlike with the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, Zambia will have to create a comprehensive mechanism of engaging the private sector during the sustainable development goals process.

57. Finally, Zambia's eligibility to the low middle-income status has brought challenges. The performance in the Millennium Development Goals characterize that of a poor country which also faces declining ODA, when the country depends on more than 80 per cent of support from external resources that have enabled it meet two indicators, on HIV and AIDS, among only four Millennium Development Goal indicators achieved. Zambia, therefore, should devise a sustainable mechanism for ensuring domestic financing if it is to maintain or even improve the achievements made in combating HIV and AIDS.

Recommendations

58. It is evident from the present report that the business-as-usual macroeconomic growth and the trickle-down pathways of the past are not working in Zambia and they continue to exacerbate inequalities. In order to have a transformative change during the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, the following measures are recommended:

(a) Putting in place a comprehensive rights-based, equitable and suitable approach to national development based on governance principles that enable participation of the poor in the national development process is critical to enhancing the country's performance in the implementation of national development plans and the sustainable development goals;

(b) Addressing the observed challenges of policy coordination, fragmentation and incoherence while ensuring that cross-cutting issues of governance, gender, HIV/AIDS, labour, environmental sustainability, science, technology and innovation are mainstreamed into sectoral strategies and policies is a development imperative that the country should continue pursuing;

(c) Using the targets derived from the demographic dividend study, the revision by the Government of the national population policy with a view to making it an overarching policy from which other sectoral policies will derive respective

[d] Jeffrey D. Sachs, "From Millennium Development Goals to sustainable development goals", *The Lancet*, vol. 379 (9 June 2012).

strategies and policies is important in laying a firm foundation for the implementation of the sustainable development goals and the subsequent national development plan. The demographic dividend model and the revised national population policy should further guide the direction, targets and strategies within the Seventh National Development Plan (2017-2021);

(d) The localization of national development indicators through a clear framework of accountability based on clear goals, operational time-bound targets and indicators that can be measured at the subnational community level, with the participation of marginalized groups, will smooth the implementation of the sustainable development goals and other agreed upon international development frameworks;

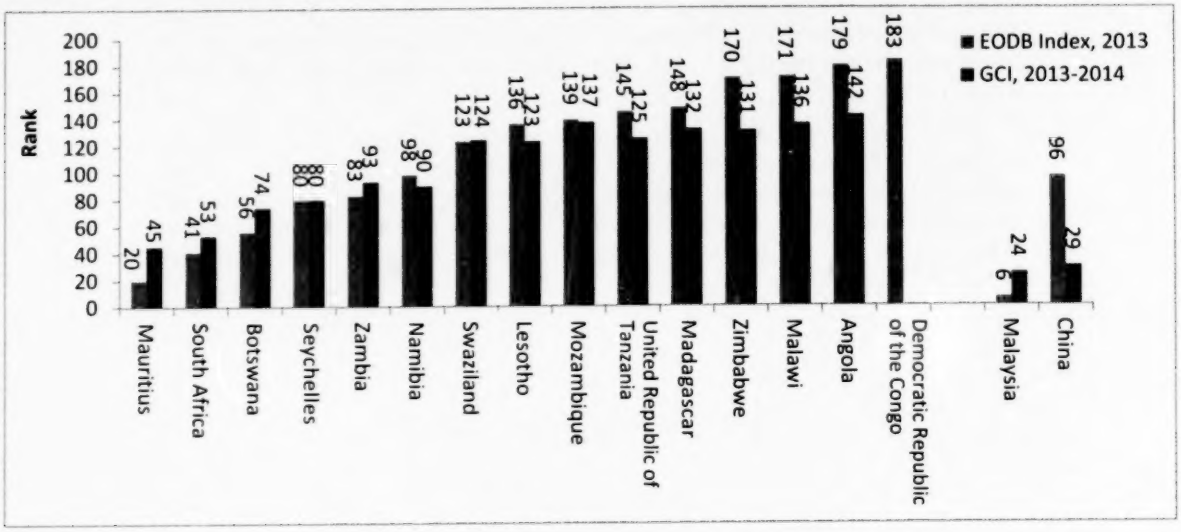
(e) The Government, with the support of partners, should remain focused in its endeavour to strengthen statistical systems and the use of quality data to improve policy design and monitoring. Strategies and policies must be harmonized with the statistical calendar to avoid time lags between data and milestones for goals, targets and indicators as was the case during the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Enclosure

Statistical information

Figure I

Ease of Doing Business Index and the Global Competitiveness Index rank out of 189 and 148 countries, respectively, for countries of the Southern African Development Community compared with Malaysia and China, 2013

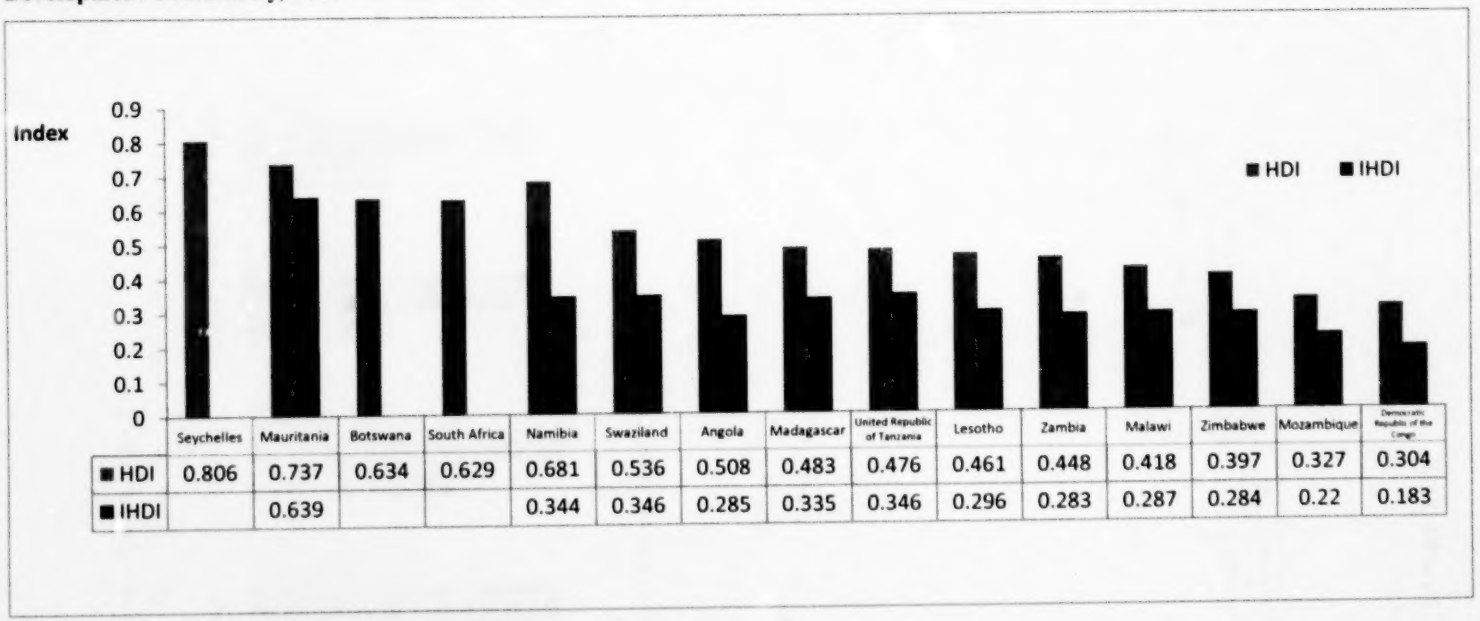


Source: World Bank, *Ease of Doing Business Report 2014*; and World Economic Forum, *The Global Competitiveness Report 2013-2014*.

Abbreviations: EODB, Ease of Doing Business; GCI, Global Competitiveness Index.

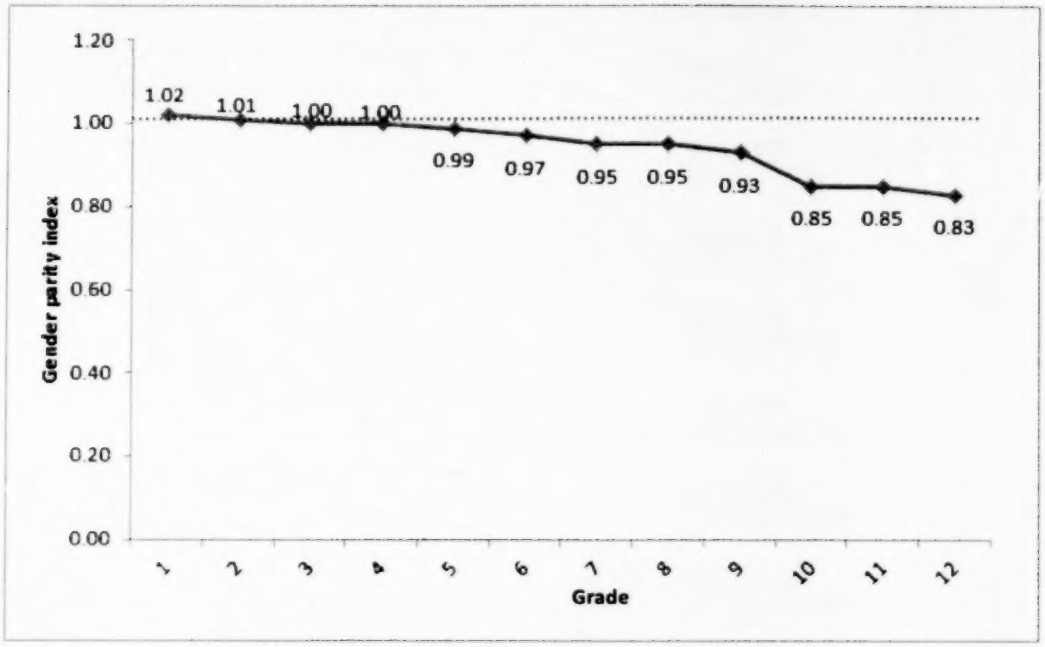
Figure II

Human Development Index and Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index, for countries of the Southern African Development Community, 2012



	Seychelles	Mauritania	Botswana	South Africa	Namibia	Swaziland	Angola	Madagascar	United Republic of Tanzania	Lesotho	Zambia	Malawi	Zimbabwe	Mozambique	Democratic Republic of the Congo
HDI	0.806	0.737	0.634	0.629	0.681	0.536	0.508	0.483	0.476	0.461	0.448	0.418	0.397	0.327	0.304
IHDI		0.639			0.344	0.346	0.285	0.335	0.346	0.296	0.283	0.287	0.284	0.22	0.183

Figure III
Gender parity index in all schools by grade, Zambia, 2013



Source: *2013 Educational Statistical Bulletin*, April 2014.

Figure IV
Extreme poverty by employment in rural and urban areas of Zambia

Source: Central Statistical Office, Living Conditions Monitoring Survey 2010.

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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Economic and Social Council
2015 session
21 July 2014-22 July 2015
Agenda item 9
Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/182, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance. The report is also submitted in response to Assembly resolution 69/135 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2014/13. The period covered by the report is January to December 2014.

The report describes major humanitarian trends and challenges and analyses a number of thematic issues, including meeting capacity and resource challenges through humanitarian effectiveness, risk management approaches, changes to humanitarian financing, adherence to international humanitarian law and principles, and addressing access and protection concerns. The report provides an overview of current efforts to improve humanitarian coordination and response.

* A/70/50.

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I. Introduction

1. Humanitarian responses to level 3 emergencies in the Central African Republic, Iraq, the Philippines,[1] South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic, and the continuation of other crises that caused tremendous suffering dominated 2014. More than 76 million people were targeted to receive humanitarian assistance in 31 countries and nearly $11 billion in funding was received for inter-agency appeals.[2] The continuing high level of demand for relief, the collective inability of the international community to resolve protracted conflicts and the convergence of various global trends have led to more frequent and intense humanitarian crises and have severely hindered the operational and financial capacity of Governments and humanitarian organizations to respond adequately.

2. By the end of 2014, the number of people internally displaced by armed conflict and generalized violence stood at 38 million, as reported by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, by mid-2014 the global refugee population was 18.1 million.[3]

3. The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters recorded 271 natural disasters, which claimed an estimated 6,400 lives, affected 102 million people and caused damage worth over $85 billion. Asia continued to be the most affected region, with almost half the recorded natural disasters occurring in the region, accounting for 80 per cent of all deaths.

4. In 2014, Member States, Observers and public entities contributed more than $479 million to the Central Emergency Response Fund — the highest-ever annual total. The Emergency Relief Coordinator allocated $461 million for life-saving humanitarian activities in 45 countries and territories. More than 90 per cent went to complex emergencies and 10 per cent was allocated in response to natural disasters. Country-based pooled funds received more than $500 million from 22 Member States and allocated $453 million to humanitarian actors in complex emergencies and natural disasters in 17 countries.[4]

5. In 2014, the continued lack of compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights law and accountability for violations was of particular concern. Nearly 80 per cent of humanitarian work takes place in countries and regions affected by conflict. On a daily basis, non-State actors and Governments directly attack civilians and deny assistance to those in need, in violation of international humanitarian law, and with impunity. It has become increasing difficult for humanitarians to gain access to those in need and to meet the protection needs of people.

6. In addition to continued and strengthened adherence to international humanitarian law and human rights law, while addressing the political and underlying conditions that cause and prolong humanitarian needs, more can be done by all actors to address humanitarian challenges. Improved humanitarian

[1] The level 3 designation ended in mid-February 2014 for the Philippines.

[2] Data as at 2 April 2014 from the financial tracking service, available from http://fts.unocha.org.

[3] Year-end data for 2014 was not available at the time of submission of the present report.

[4] As reported to the Financial Tracking Service as at 1 April 2015.

effectiveness, risk management and better leveraging of humanitarian financing could help meet increasing needs. However, without a substantially stronger political commitment to addressing the underlying causes of humanitarian crises, it will not be possible to cover constantly increasing needs.

7. The World Humanitarian Summit, the post-2015 development framework and the disaster risk reduction framework, a new climate agreement and a new urban agenda are all unique opportunities to better address the global challenges common to development and humanitarian action.

II. Overview of humanitarian emergencies in 2014

A. Complex emergencies

8. In South Sudan, the humanitarian crisis deteriorated significantly, owing to continued violence, human rights violations and internal displacement. Nearly 2 million people fled their homes, with about 1.5 million persons being internally displaced and some 500,000 refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries, which were already struggling with emergencies of their own, such as the floods in the refugee camps in Ethiopia. Coordinated humanitarian action contributed to averting famine, but about 3.2 million people faced acute food insecurity before the harvest season. Chronic needs compounded the situation with continuing high rates of malnutrition, vulnerability to outbreaks of disease, violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses, including widespread gender-based violence.

9. In the Sudan, 450,000 people were newly displaced by the conflict in Darfur, as the Government scaled up operations against armed groups. Large-scale clashes between tribal groups also continued in certain areas. That pushed the estimated total number of internally displaced persons in Darfur above 2.5 million. Operations by Government forces in areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) also intensified, compounding the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people remained cut off from cross-line access. At least 120,000 South Sudanese refugees arrived in the Sudan during 2014. Despite increased needs, the operating environment for humanitarian actors remained extremely challenging, owing to restrictions on access and worsening security.

10. In Somalia, for the first time since the 2011 famine, the number of people affected by food insecurity and emergency increased, from 860,000 to 1.1 million, owing to drought, continued conflict, the restricted flow of commercial goods as a result of military operations and surging food prices. There are currently some 3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, 1.1 million internally displaced persons and nearly 1 million refugees in neighbouring countries.

11. More than half the population of the Central African Republic, 2.5 million people, needed urgent humanitarian assistance in 2014. The situation faced by ethnic and religious minorities remained highly precarious. Over 891,000 people are internally displaced or refugees in neighbouring countries.

12. In Nigeria and neighbouring countries, the impact of Boko Haram's brutal tactics led to a dramatic worsening of the humanitarian situation, resulting in a refugee and returnee influx and the overall internal displacement of at least

1.2 million people, as at 6 March 2015. The limited or complete lack of access to affected populations in north-eastern Nigeria has restricted the scope of the humanitarian response. Over 200,000 people fled to the Niger, Cameroon and Chad, according to UNHCR. The deterioration in the security situation in the Lake Chad area linked to the cross-border nature of Boko Haram activities also triggered internal displacements in the three neighbouring countries, including between 100,000-150,000 internally displaced persons in Cameroon.[5]

13. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, there were 2.7 million internally displaced persons by the end of 2014. In Katanga Province alone, 180,000 people were displaced as a result of continued fighting and insecurity. Gender-based violence remains rampant. The countrywide chronic malnutrition rate hovers around 43 per cent, while there is an 11 per cent acute malnutrition rate.

14. In the Sahel region, some 20 million people remained at risk of food insecurity and that number reached 24 million during the lean season. More than 5 million children were affected by acute malnutrition, including 1.5 million suffering from severe malnutrition. In Mali, approximately 2 million people were affected by food insecurity. Some 82,000 internally displaced persons and over 143,000 refugees remained in Mauritania, the Niger and Burkina Faso. Gains that had been made in restoring State authority and public infrastructure in Gao, Mopti and Timbuktu eroded owing to military confrontations between armed groups, resulting in the abuse and pillaging of the local population and creating new humanitarian needs and displacements.

15. During the reporting period, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in the Syrian Arab Republic increased from 10.8 million to 12.2 million and the number of internally displaced persons increased from 6.4 million to 7.6 million. By the end of the year, over 3.7 million Syrians were refugees in neighbouring countries. Violence worsened and essential services were interrupted for millions. Access to 4.8 million people in hard-to-reach locations remained challenging.

16. In the occupied Palestinian territory, around 1,500 civilian Palestinians, including more than 550 children, were killed and 100,000 were left without a home during the Gaza conflict. In Israel, five civilians, including a child, as well as a security guard, were killed. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, a record number of some 1,200 Palestinians were displaced owing to home demolitions by the Israeli authorities, while settlement and settler activity continued. The rise of casualties during law enforcement operations raised concerns over the use of excessive force and collective punishment. Movement and access restrictions continued to undermine livelihood and access to services.

17. The situation in Yemen remains volatile and extremely fragile, leading to ever-increasing humanitarian challenges. In 2014, conflicts caused more displacement: almost 100,000 people were displaced, while more than 300,000 people remained in protracted internal displacement. Political turmoil and financial challenges led to a further deterioration in already weak basic services, leaving millions of people without access to health care, safe water or proper sanitation. There are some 257,650 registered refugees in Yemen. Some 91,600 people reached Yemen by sea and approximately 250 lives were lost at sea.

[5] As at 6 March 2015.

18. In Iraq, 5.2 million people were in need of emergency assistance, including 2.2 million people located in hard-to-reach areas and 2.1 million internally displaced persons. Iraq hosted 235,000 Syrian refugees. Human rights violations were rampant. Protracted political stalemates, a collapse of the Iraqi security forces and widespread corruption have crippled the Iraqi economy and the delivery of services.

19. In Libya, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated since fighting erupted in mid-2014. In particular, the widespread use of explosive weapons in populated areas has taken a heavy toll on civilians, causing death, injury, trauma, destruction of essential infrastructure and displacement. There are approximately 400,000 internally displaced persons, many of whom have been displaced more than once owing to the widening conflict.

20. In Myanmar regular and sustained access to people affected by conflict and communal tensions remained challenging. Two and a half years after communal violence in Rakhine State, close to 140,000 people remained displaced. In Kachin, humanitarian access to areas beyond government control continued to be difficult, with fighting between the Myanmar Army and the Kachin Independence Army escalating at the end of the year.

21. In the Philippines, clan feuds and fighting between the armed forces of the Philippines and armed groups continued in Mindanao, where more than 120,000 were newly displaced. In Zamboanga City, nearly 20,000 people remained in evacuation centres and transition sites while at least 11,000 people were with host communities. Inadequate shelter and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in evacuation centres have contributed to poor health and nutrition conditions, especially among children.

22. In Ukraine, the conflict between government forces and separatists in the east of the country triggered a humanitarian crisis, with more than 4,771 deaths and the displacement of over 1.2 million people, of whom some 593,600 have entered neighbouring countries since the beginning of the conflict. Both government forces and separatists have fired explosive weapons into populated areas, killing or injuring large numbers of civilians, causing the destruction of homes and public buildings and triggering extensive displacement. Those remaining in conflict-affected areas, particularly in densely populated urban areas, have suffered extreme hardship and difficulty in accessing basic life-saving services and education services.

23. In Afghanistan, 164,000 people were displaced by the ongoing conflict, bringing the total number to 805,000. In Pakistan, approximately 1.6 million people remain displaced, of whom some 700,000 were displaced in 2014 alone, owing to the conflict in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. An additional 39,000 families were displaced to Afghanistan from Pakistan.

24. In Haiti, a 53 per cent reduction in the number of cholera cases was observed, compared with 2013. However, a surge of 17,000 cases in the last quarter of 2014 led to almost 200 deaths. Since the start of the epidemic in October 2010, 725,600 cases and 8,813 deaths have been reported. The number of internally displaced persons has dropped 95 per cent since July 2010 to about 80,000. However, in the 105 registered camps for internally displaced person, living conditions remain harsh in terms of access to water and sanitation.

B. Disasters associated with natural hazards

25. During the first six months of 2014, the Asia and Pacific regions experienced the highest number of storms in the past five years. The number of storms increased by 70 per cent, with severe impacts in several countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam and the Pacific region. In Sri Lanka, for example, 22 out of the 25 districts were affected by severe floods, which had an impact on an estimated 1.1 million people.

26. However, the human toll and economic losses were much lower in 2014 than in 2013, owing to improvements in preparedness measures and early warning systems. For instance, prior to cyclone Hudhud striking the east cost of India, the pre-emptive evacuation of some 500,000 people minimized the number of fatalities. Typhoon Hagupit made landfall in the Philippines on 6 December and affected more than 4.1 million people. Fortunately, drawing on lessons learned from typhoon Haiyan the previous year, the early action and pre-emptive evacuations undertaken by the national authorities were applauded for saving many lives and effectively responding to urgent humanitarian needs.

27. In the Greater Horn of Africa, over 12.8 million people suffered from acute food insecurity, resulting from two consecutive poor rainy seasons, ongoing conflicts in Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan and soaring food prices.

28. In Southern Africa, nine tropical cyclones were recorded between October 2013 and May 2014, of which three made landfall affecting 383,300 people and killing 117. In Comoros, on 2 April, the Government declared a regional emergency as the storms followed a 4.8 magnitude earthquake, displacing more than 7,000 people and damaging or destroying more than 900 homes. In all, 453,300 people were affected by floods and storms across the region.

29. Natural disasters also affected 4.6 million people in Chad, including 772,000 people by drought and 206,000 people by floods. Drought and floods affected rural communities, primarily farmers and herders, thereby affecting livelihoods and food security countrywide.

30. On 13 March 2015, tropical cyclone Pam, a highly destructive category 5 cyclone, struck Vanuatu. There were 11 confirmed fatalities and 166,600 people were affected, 75,000 of whom were in need of shelter and 110,000 left without access to safe drinking water. Initial assessment reports confirmed destruction ranging from 20 to 90 per cent of houses, schools, clinics, churches and crops on all 22 affected islands. With a heavy reliance on subsistence farming, the destruction of food gardens and loss of livestock has left households with no alternative food source. The destruction of banana plantations will have a significant social and economic impact and on long-term food security.

C. Ebola emergency response

31. In 2014, the outbreak of the Ebola virus affected Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Health structures that were already weak suffered the greatest impact and nearly collapsed: for months vaccinations were halted, death tolls from other health conditions rose and routine maternal health care was impeded. The closure of

schools left more than 5 million children without education for months. By the end of 2014, the outbreak had left thousands of children orphaned, killed breadwinners and caregivers and threatened livelihoods. Survivors were left traumatized psychologically and with continuing health needs, with many unable to return home owing to stigma. Malnutrition and food insecurity — already prevalent in those countries before the outbreak — are expected to increase. Concerns over protection include the displacement of entire villages, induced by fear of the disease, and security measures at border posts and around quarantined areas.

32. A wide variety of actors took part in the response, with different response systems, networks and providers, national Governments and the international community coming together to respond jointly. National and international non-governmental organizations, particularly Médecins sans frontières and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, mobilized early on. National private sectors also deployed their know-how, understanding of the local context and capabilities. The United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) was established on 19 September 2014 as a temporary measure to lead the international response. Hours after the United Nations decided to establish UNMEER, a joint United Nations disaster assessment and coordination team was sent to Liberia to assess the response to the outbreak. Over 175 organizations were involved in response programmes in the three high-transmission countries to stop the outbreak, treat the infected, ensure the provision of essential services, preserve stability and prevent the outbreak from spreading to unaffected countries.

III. Effectiveness, financing and risk management

33. Almost 25 years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 46/182 and the establishment of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, a record 33 emergencies and crises, covered by appeals, are stretching the capacity of the humanitarian system to its limit. While the more than $11 billion provided for 2014 through inter-agency appeals was an all-time high, so too was the $7.4 billion shortfall, highlighting the need to make the best use of available resources. Megatrends, such as climate change and environmental degradation, food security, water scarcity, population growth and urbanization, are leading to ever more vulnerability and exposure to hazards. Furthermore, crises are becoming more protracted, with 78 per cent of humanitarian spending by the members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development going to protracted emergencies. Humanitarian appeals last for an average of seven years, and six countries (Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, occupied Palestinian territory, Somalia and Sudan) have had appeals for 10 consecutive years. The Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic account for 70 per cent of funding requests for 2015 — all crises that are likely to have a humanitarian impact over the coming years in the absence of a definitive political solution.

34. Meanwhile, with the global economy tripling since 1992, many Governments have improved their capacity to handle crises and are therefore requesting assistance less frequently, preferring the international humanitarian system to work in a more tailored manner to fill specific gaps, provide specific services, or further develop national expertise. There are many more actors, including national and local civil

society actors and private sector companies which are confident about what they are doing and equipped to put their capacities to good use. The number and diversity of those actors pose a challenge to coherence, but can also be an opportunity to increase effectiveness if all actors work together towards a shared goal.

A. Humanitarian effectiveness

35. Meeting the needs of the affected population should be the focus of any humanitarian response. The capacities of the various responders, whether Governments, local or national civil society actors, or partners in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, should be leveraged towards that goal. To make the necessary cooperation work, the particular context, including the needs, drivers of need and available capacities to respond, should be taken into account. The size and shape a response takes should be customized for the specific context, with multilateral actors engaging in relation to an accurate understanding of the capacities already at hand to meet needs.

36. In pursuing effective humanitarian action, the perspective of each actor also has to be considered. Some prioritize building trust, relationships and capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters, while many focus on aspects of delivery, such as efficiency, coverage, timeliness and relevance. For others, effectiveness means improved flexibility and the capacity to align services with needs, requiring greater efforts to understand the needs and capacities of affected communities. It will be necessary to anticipate how emerging trends and challenges, such as technology, the increased number and capacities of middle-income countries and the number of new partners, will change the way needs are met.

37. Despite the varying perspectives, common ideas are emerging as to what effective responses require. First, there is a critical need to maximize resources and expertise by connecting more predictably the many actors and systems involved in humanitarian response. The consequences of not linking those emerging capacities include the likelihood of a fragmented response and missed opportunities to strengthen humanitarian action in a more sustainable manner.

38. Second, the aim of international humanitarian actors should be to complement, not substitute, national actors. While in many crises, international humanitarian actors will still play a critical role in providing assistance and protection measures to people in need, Member States are increasingly requesting more technical support, expertise, standards and best practices from United Nations agencies to support, validate or strengthen their own efforts. Given the particular needs in a given context, the role of international humanitarian actors may contract or expand in relation to the needs of Governments and the capacities of non-governmental national actors, including the private sector. In some situations, that may involve a call for system-wide scale-up triggered by the level 3 designation. In other cases, the international humanitarian system may play a different or more limited role, acting as a broker to connect various partners, as a service provider for the Government, supporting coordination, or supporting the development of a national response capacity. The goal should be to build capacity at the most local level possible, thereby lessening the need for large-scale international responses in the future.

39. Third, the goals that are shared among international humanitarian actors must include a clear exit strategy, with clear benchmarks to signal the phase-out of humanitarian operations. Such benchmarks should be part of the joint planning with national actors and those outside the humanitarian community, to ensure that the different actors work together to achieve a shared set of objectives, with each contributing according to their role and capacities. That implies a longer-term, outcome-oriented approach that responds to real time frames and the fluidity of needs, including better linkages with development, peacebuilding and climate change agendas.

B. Humanitarian financing

40. While it is clear that full and predictable funding for humanitarian appeals remains essential, it is also clear that the humanitarian financing architecture must evolve to remain effective. The approach must address the problem not just by increasing humanitarian funding, but by taking measures to improve the efficiency of humanitarian response, prioritizing available resources for the most urgent needs and strengthening links to development financing mechanisms to build the resilience of vulnerable populations before, during and after crises.

41. To that end, it is necessary for humanitarian and development actors to work together to transition responsibilities at an early stage, to ensure that humanitarian funds are retained for other emergencies. Under the workplan of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee task team on humanitarian financing, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, World Vision and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with financial support from FAO and Germany, launched the future humanitarian financing dialogues in 2014. The solution is not only to attract more funding and to improve the ways humanitarian partners spend those funds, but to develop new norms, whereby other actors commit to taking on responsibilities for underlying risks and long-term chronic needs.

42. Funding needs to be more flexible to allow for a complementary approach in addressing immediate needs, protracted crises and the underlying causes of crises. To implement the change that is required, the current humanitarian planning cycles, which are one year in length, are beginning to move to longer planning periods. In 2015, for example, 10 of the 33 appeals include multi-year plans. Donors should be encouraged to commit to flexible funding for multi-year appeals and bridge the divide between humanitarian and development financing.

43. To make recommendations for bringing about necessary change, the Secretary-General has decided to appoint a high-level panel on humanitarian financing, with the aim of engaging with the discussions on the post-2015 financing for development and informing the World Humanitarian Summit to be held in May 2016. While building on the findings of various stakeholders, the panel is expected to produce recommendations based around three questions — How can the growing gap be narrowed by mobilizing more from both Member States, and through innovative funding mechanisms? How can the predictability of funding be increased? And how can the humanitarian system use the resources available for the greatest impact?

C. Risk management approach

44. Managing the risk of humanitarian challenges and taking action before they become large-scale crises must be a priority for all actors. Of the 50 countries at the highest risk of undergoing crises, according to the Index for Risk Management, 38 have made an inter-agency humanitarian appeal in the last 10 years. A risk-based approach is needed to save more lives today and avoid crises tomorrow, while reducing costs, especially in protracted crises. Two major systemic changes are needed for a shift towards a risk management approach to crises.

45. First, it is imperative for humanitarian responses to be planned over a multi-year framework of at least three to five years and linked with development planning processes that go beyond the cycles of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, while integrating all key development stakeholders, including Governments, regional organizations and international financial institutions. Current multi-year humanitarian strategic plans must gradually evolve from multiple single years to truly transformative multi-year action. Based on a joint understanding of the risk landscape, multi-year plans should include dynamic benchmarks that are linked to context-specific milestones and clear objectives that allow for a progressive transition from humanitarian response to local, national and development partners, while building their capacity to manage risks at various levels. Such an approach will better reflect the length of many crises, while also ensuring that humanitarian actors, in synergy with development actors, can make more concerted efforts towards sustainable solutions.

46. Second, the short term nature of humanitarian financing is a major barrier for undertaking effective risk-informed multi-year humanitarian planning. Raising money on a yearly basis for crises that are protracted is not cost-effective and does not allow humanitarian agencies to benefit from the potential efficiencies to be gained from multi-year planning. Resource mobilization over a multi-year framework that is also aligned with development funding mechanisms and financing for climate change adaptation should therefore be prioritized.

47. To achieve that, it is necessary to improve existing risk management tools for humanitarian programming, which are currently more oriented towards meeting immediate humanitarian needs. That will include building greater complementarity between common assessments, based on a shared understanding of risk, such as the humanitarian needs overview and the common country assessments. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee emergency response preparedness approach is also an important tool for identifying risk in the preparedness phase, while the common framework for preparedness has been agreed with the United Nations Development Group and the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to achieve more synergy between humanitarian and development action.

48. Risk management tools should allow for better use of baseline information and risk analysis, including analysis of the underlying causes of crises and the different risk exposures of affected populations, such as gender inequality, exclusion and vulnerabilities. In that regard, the further development of established tools, such as the Index for Risk Management, to include more data disaggregated by sex and age and region- and country-specific criteria is a welcome development. In order to take effective risk mitigation measures prior to a crisis, humanitarian and development

actors need to use risk indicators to push for action before, during and after crises, including as outlined in the Sendai Declaration and Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Early action should prioritize response options, promoting early recovery approaches, especially in protracted and cyclical crises. In that way, multi-year action will effectively promote greater complementarity between humanitarian and development actors and resilience building.

IV. Serving the needs of people in conflict

49. In armed conflicts around the world, the fundamental tenets of international humanitarian law continue to be undermined at every turn. Parties to conflicts deliberately or recklessly kill hundreds of civilians every day, often with impunity. Far from being collateral damage, civilian death or suffering is often the very purpose of attacks, sieges and denial of aid. Explosive weapons are regularly used in densely populated areas, in the full knowledge that they will inevitably kill, injure or displace large numbers of civilians and destroy homes and infrastructure. Direct attacks on civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals, once taboo, have become a method of warfare. Parties to conflicts repeatedly and often arbitrarily obstruct or deny humanitarian access to people in need. Attacks against humanitarian and health-care workers and facilities have reached record levels. Overall, violence and other forms of persecution force an average of 23,000 people per day to flee their homes. The number of people experiencing displacement as a result of conflict exceeds 50 million, which is an unprecedented number since the Second World War. In that context, humanitarian organizations find it difficult to undertake their work. Improving compliance with international humanitarian law and promoting accountability for violations are urgently needed to better protect civilians from the devastating effects of armed conflicts.

A. Humanitarian access

50. Millions of people across a range of conflicts remain without adequate access to assistance, owing to the hostilities, to insecurity and to the obstacles put in place by the parties to those conflicts. Humanitarian access to people in need is a prerequisite for effective humanitarian action, including needs assessments, protection and the provision of assistance. Every time humanitarian convoys are unnecessarily delayed or prevented from reaching their destination, consent for relief operations is arbitrarily withheld, or aid is destroyed and warehouses looted, hundreds of thousands of people are deprived of urgently needed food, water, medicine or shelter. As in previous years, in the period covered by the present report, some Governments have used cumbersome administrative procedures to restrict the movement of humanitarian convoys and the delivery of essential items. Parties to conflicts have the primary responsibility for the protection and well-being of populations under their control. They should be held accountable when they fail to uphold their responsibilities. Impartial humanitarian organizations must be allowed to carry out relief operations when the needs of the population are not met.

51. While the consent of affected States is required before relief operations may be undertaken, such consent may not be arbitrarily withheld. The affected State does not have unfettered discretion to withhold consent to impartial humanitarian

operations. It is increasingly recognized that the arbitrary withholding of consent to relief operations is a violation of international law that gives rise to international responsibility for the State withholding consent. All Member States have an important role to play in promoting compliance by State and non-State actors with the rules regulating the provision of humanitarian assistance and ensuring that there is accountability when those rules are violated.

52. Once relief actions have been agreed to by affected States, the relevant parties must allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of relief consignments, equipment and personnel. Administrative procedures and other formalities must not prevent the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance in a principled manner and should be simplified and expedited.

53. For humanitarian actors to be able to reach people in need, it is essential that their activities be exclusively humanitarian in nature and comply with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and be perceived as doing so. When parties to a conflict, or other stakeholders, blur the lines between humanitarian assistance and political objectives, that can impair lifesaving humanitarian operations and impact negatively on how humanitarian actors are perceived and their ability to protect, reach and provide assistance and services to people in need.

B. Safety and security

54. Preliminary records from the Aid Worker Security Database show that 270 aid workers were killed, kidnapped or seriously wounded in 2014. The largest proportion of aid workers killed (67 out of 105) were victims of targeted attacks or crossfire while delivering assistance. Improvised explosive devices and complex attacks accounted for 20 per cent of aid workers killed. Ninety per cent of the victims (244 out of 270) were national staff, who account for the majority of humanitarian workers.[6] Those estimates mark a significant improvement compared with 2013 (155 aid workers killed). However, the overall situation remains highly unsatisfactory, with repeated attacks against humanitarian and health-care personnel across conflicts.

55. Violence against humanitarian workers and health-care personnel can have a devastating impact as it disrupts the provision of assistance and essential services. In the most serious cases, it can oblige humanitarian organizations to close health facilities or suspend the delivery of assistance. In 2014, the deliberate denial of impartial health-care services to sick and wounded combatants and civilians was also observed and medical items were removed from aid shipments. Attacks directed at health-care personnel, facilities, transport, equipment and other services exclusively engaged in medical duties constitute serious violations of international humanitarian law and, potentially, war crimes. Parties to conflicts must be held accountable for attacks against humanitarian and health-care personnel.

[6] As at 23 March 2015, the figures for 2014 had not been finalized.

C. Explosive weapons in populated areas

56. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas remains a serious challenge for the protection of civilians. In 2014, when explosive weapons were used in populated areas, 92 per cent of the casualties were civilians.[7] The use of explosive weapons is often a primary cause of civilian deaths, injuries and displacement. It also has a severe long-term humanitarian and development impact. People injured by explosive weapons require emergency and specialist medical treatment that often does not exist, in part because hospitals and clinics may have been damaged or destroyed by explosive weapons. Schools are also damaged or destroyed, as well as commercial property and the means of production, thus devastating livelihoods. Explosive remnants of war pose a threat until they are safely removed. The impact on post-conflict reconstruction requirements and costs is dramatic.

57. International humanitarian law contains important provisions for the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including from the effects of explosive weapons. While it does not prohibit the use of explosive weapons per se, in many cases the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas constitutes unlawful conduct because of their indiscriminate impact. The use of barrel bombs, cluster munitions or explosives with wide-area effects in populated areas will be likely to kill large numbers of civilians and destroy homes and infrastructure, often in direct violation of the fundamental principles of distinction and proportionality, yet seems to be accepted as a normal method of warfare. Putting a stop to such unacceptable practices is a collective responsibility. Strict compliance with international humanitarian law by all parties to conflicts would significantly contribute to protecting civilians from the effects of explosive weapons.

58. The development of policy standards that limit the use of explosive weapons in populated areas would provide much-needed protection to civilians. The United Nations is working with Member States and civil society partners to promote the adoption of a political commitment that recognizes the humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas and seeks to constrain their use. In November 2013, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale to all Member States requesting that they provide relevant information to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs pertaining to their practices and policies regarding the protection of civilians. Member States are encouraged to provide such information.

D. Internal displacement

59. Of particular concern is the number of conflict-induced internally displaced persons, which reached a record level at the end of 2013, with 33 million persons internally displaced, the majority of whom were women and children. The average length of conflict-induced internal displacement is 17 years, during which time many internally displaced persons have limited access to basic services, struggle to find livelihoods and are at increased risk of discrimination and exploitation, while displaced children have limited access to education. Displacement increases risks and vulnerabilities, such as gender-based violence, particularly for women and girls. The risk of disaster-induced displacement is estimated to have doubled in the past

[7] Figures provided by Action on Armed Violence, based on a preliminary assessment of a consolidated data set of incidents of explosive violence recorded during 2014.

40 years and is expected to further increase as demographic and socioeconomic pressures and environmental change continue to create conditions of vulnerability.

60. Despite some progress to improve the coordination and effectiveness of the humanitarian response in support of internally displaced persons, important gaps remain. The Brookings Institution study entitled "Ten years after humanitarian reform: how have internally displaced persons fared?", released in 2014 with the support of UNHCR, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Switzerland, highlighted the challenges and achievements to date, including the importance of strong, sustained political leadership, with investment at senior levels, and the effective involvement of development actors to address the needs of internally displaced persons. For example, Côte d'Ivoire, Kyrgyzstan and Mali have developed strategies for internally displaced persons and returning refugees. Those are good examples of cooperation between development and humanitarian actors which should be repeated where feasible.

61. The sustainable development goals will offer a once-in-a-generation opportunity to effectively address protracted displacement. To that end, the plight of millions of internally displaced persons and refugees around the world should be reflected in the framework, as well as their right to live in safety and dignity, with access to essential services, education and legal documentation, and to return safely to their homes or integrate into new communities.

E. Gender-based violence

62. Gender-based violence remains a core protection concern in situations of conflict, disaster and displacement. In 2014, sexual violence, including rape, slavery and forced marriage, against adolescent girls continued to be a disturbing pattern. Other concerns include the use of sexual violence as a form of persecution to forcibly displace populations. Sexual violence in the context of rising violent extremism was also reported.

63. The newly revised Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action specifically detail minimum interventions for prevention and response to sexual violence. Critical, field-driven programmes, such as the information management system on gender-based violence, are essential for ensuring a robust response to meet overwhelming need. Also essential are political will and collective and decisive recognition at the highest levels that addressing gender-based violence in a humanitarian crisis is central to an effective humanitarian response and to promoting resilience and recovery. Increased support and funding for programming to address gender-based violence are urgently required.

F. Adverse humanitarian consequences of counter-terrorism measures

64. During the past decade, the Security Council and many Member States have adopted or expanded counter-terrorism measures. While efforts to fight terrorism are legitimate, they may at times have adverse humanitarian consequences. Continued dialogue between humanitarian organizations, the Governments concerned, donors and the counter-terrorism and sanctions committees of the Security Council is essential to limit the potential negative impact of some counter-terrorism measures.

Humanitarian actors, Member States and intergovernmental organizations should work together to ensure the inclusion of exemptions for humanitarian action in domestic and international legal regimes and policies relating to sanctions and counter-terrorism. It is equally crucial to ensure that the humanitarian perspective is included in the deliberations of leading entities on financial transactions, such as the Financial Action Task Force. In addition, there is a pressing need for the definition of acceptable parameters for counter-terrorism clauses in funding agreements. The dialogue on counter-terrorism measures should also touch on risk management and due diligence. Humanitarian actors should put in place, where possible and according to prevailing circumstances, the monitoring systems necessary to ensure that aid goes only to those who are in greatest need. As part of those efforts, humanitarian organizations and Member States should engage in a dialogue on risk mitigation, risk tolerance and risk sharing.

V. Progress in the coordination of humanitarian action

A. Humanitarian programme cycle

65. The humanitarian programme cycle is a coordinated series of actions undertaken to help prepare for, manage and deliver a more effective humanitarian response and better address the needs of affected people. In 2014, particular emphasis was placed on identifying lessons learnt and best practices to inform adjustments to guidance and tools. For example, the multicluster/sector initial rapid assessment framework has been updated, based on its application in the aftermath of typhoon Haiyan and other disasters over the past two years. The use of mobile data collection tools, such as KoBo, which proved useful in the response to the outbreak of the Ebola virus, is being expanded.

66. With regard to protection, one key objective is to strengthen the analysis of protection concerns and actions that can improve the protection of affected people in humanitarian response plans and across all sectors of the humanitarian response. Equal attention is being paid to mainstreaming protection into programme development and implementation by each sector. Under the auspices of the Global Protection Cluster, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee has launched an independent "whole system" review. The review, which will be completed in the first half of 2015, will offer recommendations on how the humanitarian system can improve the protection of people in need in humanitarian crises. Joint missions have been conducted, including to South Sudan, to help strengthen coordination at the field level through humanitarian country teams, inter-cluster/sector mechanisms and sector coordination.

67. In 2015, the humanitarian programme cycle will continue to be refined through embedding crisis risk analysis at the core of humanitarian strategic planning, including by linking regional and national versions of the Index for Risk Management to joint humanitarian and development programming. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Development Operations Coordination Office will prepare and update joint guidance on aligning development and humanitarian planning cycles for delivering long-term resilience-enabling outcomes in protracted and cyclical crises. There will also be an increased focus on monitoring, with the monitoring component of the humanitarian programme cycle

being fully rolled out in 2015. That will improve accountability in delivery and ensure that necessary adjustments are made during the course of a response.

Understanding the different needs of affected people

68. Given the different needs, capacities, challenges and experiences of women, men, girls and boys, including adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities and older persons, the participation of all affected groups in decision-making and in the implementation of responses is essential to ensure that humanitarian programming is informed, appropriate and effective.

69. The communication needs of different segments of the population and the possible barriers to accessing information, should also be systematically assessed and taken into consideration in the planning of a response, so that humanitarian actors can provide information that will allow communities to access the help they need or prioritize their needs, contribute to the design of responses, make informed decisions and be effective leaders in their own recovery.

70. The practice of systematically collecting, analysing and using data disaggregated by sex and age to inform programming is critical, as is prioritizing gender and age analysis, especially in identifying the most vulnerable and reducing vulnerability to different forms of exploitation. A commitment to providing the necessary levels of financial and human resources required to deliver gender-responsive humanitarian action is critical.

71. In 2014, as part of the commitment of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee under the transformative agenda to improve accountability to affected people, the humanitarian community continued to take steps to establish frameworks and systems to engage different segments of the population in decision-making processes. That inclusive and participatory approach should be integral to all phases of the humanitarian programme cycle. However, challenges remain in understanding how best to equitably engage people affected by conflict, in particular the most at-risk groups, given the limitations imposed by the lack of humanitarian access and possible security implications.

72. In Inter-Agency Standing Committee operational peer reviews, the importance of establishing gender responsive frameworks on engaging and communicating with communities as a preparedness measure was noted, as were the difficulties of integrating that work in the midst of a level 3 emergency. One of the conclusions of the reviews was that all staff training and induction sessions should cover accountability to, and communications with, affected people, including measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse.

Gender equality and women's empowerment

73. Gender equality and women's empowerment in humanitarian action is central to efficient and effective preparedness and response. Existing gender inequalities deepen during emergencies and women and girls are likely to be disproportionately affected, as they are more exposed to gendered risks and vulnerabilities. For example, human trafficking can flourish in emergencies, exploiting the vulnerabilities of women and children. Recognizing and addressing the different and specific priorities of women, girls, boys and men of different ages, disabilities and disparities should be the fundamental basis that informs humanitarian action.

74. There is a need for better ways to hold all accountable to the commitments made in global, regional and national normative frameworks to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment in preparedness and humanitarian response. In 2014, the operational peer reviews of level 3 emergencies all highlighted the gaps in the translation into practical action of policies that ensured increased protection of vulnerable populations. Tools such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee gender marker, which have been in use since 2009, should be adapted and utilized, and linked to the humanitarian programme cycle and monitoring systems, to enable results to be tracked. That will not only contribute to effectiveness, but also improve accountability and prioritization of the most vulnerable groups.

Sexual and reproductive health

75. Sixty per cent of preventable maternal deaths and 53 per cent of deaths of children aged under five take place in settings of conflict, displacement and natural disasters Without access to emergency obstetric services, many women die while pregnant or when giving birth and many more suffer long-term health consequences that are preventable. Many newborns do not survive even their first 24 hours of life. Under those circumstances and without access to sexual and reproductive health, maternal and infant mortality rates will rise. Reliable and secure access to lifesaving reproductive health services and commodities is essential, such as those necessary to protect women and adolescent girls from preventable death during complicated obstructed deliveries or from unintended pregnancies. It is essential that proper care, including emergency contraception, protection from sexually transmitted infections and HIV prophylaxis, be provided to all victims of sexual violence, including men and boys, ideally within 72 hours of the violence occurring. Programmes that engage boys and men in support of better sexual and reproductive health outcomes also have an important role to play. Meeting sexual and reproductive health needs is critical for the resilience and more rapid recovery of affected communities overall.

B. Information management

76. The coordination of emergency responses depends on the management and sharing of information for better analysis and decision-making. Reliable information and data is essential to inform all aspects of a response, including preparedness, planning and coordination, programme monitoring and financial tracking. Effectiveness in response to a crisis hinges on information management and in particular, on whether the latest advances in technology can be harnessed to provide information services to operational partners and evolving constituencies.

77. During the reporting period, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs began a multi-year workstream to develop new digital platforms and systems and modernize existing ones, to improve information services to the humanitarian community and support its humanitarian coordination work. Major areas of work include developing a contact management system for humanitarians in the field and upgrading its financial tracking service. Further, many United Nations humanitarian agencies and clusters have increased the quality and scope of their information management tools, such as the UNHCR data portal, a primary source of information for partners and donors working for the Syrian Arab Republic refugee response.

78. With advances in technology, the availability and volume of information in crisis situations has grown exponentially. For that information to be useful, it must be collected from a wide array of sources and transformed from raw data into information that decision makers can use quickly to help save lives. The humanitarian data exchange project, launched in 2014, will serve as a central location for humanitarian data from many organizations and countries in order to create efficiency and enhance decision making and public outreach. The platform was piloted in Colombia and Kenya in 2014 and was used in the Ebola response to present data on health-care facilities in a coherent manner.

C. Effective partnerships and complementarity

79. The humanitarian system aims to bring in more diverse political, technical and financial support for humanitarian action through proactive advocacy and strengthening relationships with all potential partners. In 2014, the multilateral system for humanitarian operations in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic and various humanitarian pooled funds saw a growth in the engagement of new and returning donors. In 2014 also, initiatives were undertaken to converge the common interests of all stakeholders for humanitarian operations in Chad, Iraq, Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, through pledging conferences, joint partnership missions, strategic dialogue and regional information platforms with diverse stakeholder participation.

80. The United Nations has continued to engage strongly with a number of regional organizations to strengthen humanitarian coordination, emergency preparedness and response actions. The adoption and ratification by member States of the African Union of the Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) shows the positive contributions that can be made by regional mechanisms in building normative frameworks which facilitate the protection of, and assistance to, the most vulnerable.

81. The United Nations also continues to connect with and strengthen complementarity among other actors involved in response efforts. For example, the recommendations set out in the 2014 report of the Overseas Development Institute, *Humanitarian Crises, Emergency Preparedness and Response: the Role of Business and the Private Sector*, were implemented, underlining the importance of strategic private sector engagement beyond the provision of material support. The deployment of private sector focal points for the responses to typhoon Haiyan and the Ebola outbreak facilitated consultations and meaningful support from the private sector.

82. National and local governments, national disaster management authorities, local civil society and faith-based organizations, donors, diaspora communities and regional actors, including foreign military forces, are just some of the other partners in humanitarian response, each providing their comparative advantage and adding concrete value. To make multipolar responses more effective, there need to be good interaction and better complementarity among actors around needs and expected outcomes, the predictability of capacities and resources and within an agreed response framework, in order to optimize and maximize collective responses to growing needs. While the traditional international humanitarian system will

continue to have a critical role in many major responses, there is a growing recognition of the need to connect the many actors and systems involved in humanitarian response more systematically and predictably.

D. Humanitarian action in urban areas

83. The concentration of people, resources and services in cities can increase the impacts of disasters, conflict and violence. Internally displaced persons, refugees and migrants are increasingly drawn to urban areas, seeking better services and livelihood opportunities, which can overstretch the absorption capacity of those cities, including essential services such as health, education, water and sanitation. Humanitarian action in urban areas requires the development of area-based approaches, in particular strong partnerships between municipal authorities, civil society organizations and humanitarian agencies. The specific risks and challenges of adapting humanitarian responses in urban areas should be considered when developing new tools and models. The multi-stakeholder engagement and multi-hazard disaster response plan for Government and civil society partners in Kenya or the deployment to the Syrian Arab Republic of senior urban advisors to guide the humanitarian response are good examples on which Member States and humanitarian organizations should build.

84. The new urban agenda, which is expected to emerge from the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) to be held in Quito in October 2016, presents a good opportunity to build urban resilience effectively, with a disaster risk reduction perspective, through better alignment of humanitarian and development programming and funding, and partnerships with local governments and the private sector.

E. "White Helmets"

85. The "White Helmets" initiative was endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 49/139 B in 1994. Since then, the Assembly has regularly renewed its support for the initiative in resolutions 54/98, 56/102, 58/118, 61/220, 67/84 69/134. Volunteers or "White Helmets" act at the request of the affected country or within the framework of a call for international humanitarian assistance and support immediate response to disasters, as well as rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. They also promote risk prevention and management. Since the adoption of the initiative, they have participated in more than 262 international humanitarian assistance missions, many of them in coordination with the United Nations. With 20 years of experience in supporting and facilitating humanitarian assistance around the world, the initiative has become a useful tool in humanitarian action.

F. Strengthening human resource capacity

86. Effective humanitarian action requires the timely deployment of staff and assets. The United Nations continues to prioritize and strengthen the timely recruitment and deployment of skilled and experienced humanitarian staff, while remaining committed to the need for diversity in geographical representation and

gender balance. The Office of Human Resources Management is working with a number of other departments on diversity outreach activities and events in numerous countries. In addition, more diverse social media outlets, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Sina Weibo and Chinese LinkedIn, will be used to post vacancies to attract a greater diversity of candidates.

VI. World Humanitarian Summit

87. The World Humanitarian Summit will convene in Istanbul on 26 and 27 May 2016. The Summit is a historic opportunity to commit to an agenda for change, aimed at saving more lives, alleviating suffering and upholding human dignity in the face of conflicts and disasters.

88. Reflecting the multi-stakeholder nature of the Summit process, a total of eight regional consultations have been organized, each directed by a regional steering group comprised of key actors from the respective regions. Each regional consultation is preceded by months of extensive inputs from stakeholders, including people affected by conflicts and disasters and civil society groups, and discussions have been held online. The regional consultation events themselves have been dynamic forums, bringing together a diverse set of actors involved in humanitarian action, including Member States.

89. Four thematic teams, each composed of a geographically diverse set of experts, have been formed to synthesize and analyse outputs from the various consultations on the four broad themes of the Summit:

- Humanitarian effectiveness
- Reducing vulnerability and managing risk
- Transformation through innovation
- Serving the needs of people in conflict.

Many humanitarian organizations and other stakeholders are currently finalizing their inputs ahead of the deadline set for 31 July 2015. A number of key issues are emerging from the consultations to date: for example, placing a greater value on humanitarian action that puts the needs of affected people at the core of the response and giving them, particularly women, a stronger voice and choice through more demand-driven humanitarian action; reinforcing humanitarian action in conflict by confronting violations of international humanitarian law and finding innovative ways to ensure affected people have access to assistance and protection; maximizing the use of available local resources and networks in humanitarian action, both in terms of preparedness, response and resilience, particularly in protracted and recurrent crises; and securing more sustained and flexible humanitarian financing.

90. In addition to the remaining regional consultations, there are several remaining key milestones in the process: the humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council, to be held in Geneva in June 2015, thematic consultations in September and the global consultation to be held in October 2015. Following those consultations, the Secretary-General will present his proposals in a summary report that sets out the priority areas for action and recommendations on how they should be taken forward.

VII. Recommendations

91. On the basis of the above, the Secretary-General recommends the following:

(a) Member States, non-State actors and humanitarian organizations should continue to promote greater respect for and adherence to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence;

(b) Member States and, where applicable, non-State actors should adhere to their obligation to respect and protect humanitarian and health-care personnel, their transport and facilities;

(c) Member States and non-State actors should improve compliance with international humanitarian law and promote accountability for violations, and Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations should condemn instances of such violations more consistently and systematically;

(d) Member States should ensure accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights perpetrated by all parties in situations of armed conflict, including attacks against humanitarian and health-care personnel and facilities, and the wilful deprivation of items necessary for survival, by pursuing all domestic and international options;

(e) Member States, United Nations entities and civil society organizations should recognize the indiscriminate character of explosive weapons and their significant impact on civilians in populated areas, strengthen the political commitment to address the problem and develop practical measures based on existing good practice;

(f) Member States, United Nations actors and humanitarian organizations should continue to work together to ensure that people are protected from harm and their rights upheld before and during a crisis, including by understanding the different protection needs of different people, and ensuring that those needs are adequately integrated into preparedness, response and recovery efforts;

(g) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations should strengthen their efforts to ensure better protection and assistance of internally displaced persons and, in particular, address the long-term nature of displacement by adopting and implementing long-term strategies, based on national and regional frameworks in line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and capacitated national institutions. In that respect, Member States should support the ratification and implementation of the Kampala Convention and give close consideration to the Guiding Principles;

(h) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations should recognize the central role of national and local authorities and institutions in addressing the specific needs of internally displaced persons and refugees, and in finding solutions for displacement, and the role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator in ensuring improved coordination with those institutions and among humanitarian organizations;

(i) Member States should make further efforts to simplify and expedite procedures for the deployment of humanitarian personnel and goods;

(j) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations should provide the necessary human and financial resources to deliver programmes responsive to the different needs of affected people, including through the systematic collection, analysis and use of data disaggregated by age and sex;

(k) The United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations should actively engage people affected by crises, in particular those most at risk, including through communication, participation in relevant processes and supporting their own efforts and capacities to meet their different needs and address their vulnerabilities;

(l) Member States should strengthen their commitments to prevent, mitigate and prepare for humanitarian crises by, inter alia, integrating risk management into national development plans, supporting multi-year humanitarian planning and ensuring connectivity of those plans with longer-term development priorities;

(m) The United Nations and humanitarian organizations should further strengthen their efforts in supporting national Governments to map emergency preparedness and response capacities at country and regional levels, including those of Governments, civil society, the private sector and other relevant actors, in order to better facilitate the connectivity and complementarity of disaster response efforts between national and international capacities;

(n) Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian organizations should invest in developing and strengthening local and national humanitarian response capacities in order to complement, rather than substitute or displace, national capacities to respond to crises, especially where those crises are prolonged or recurrent.